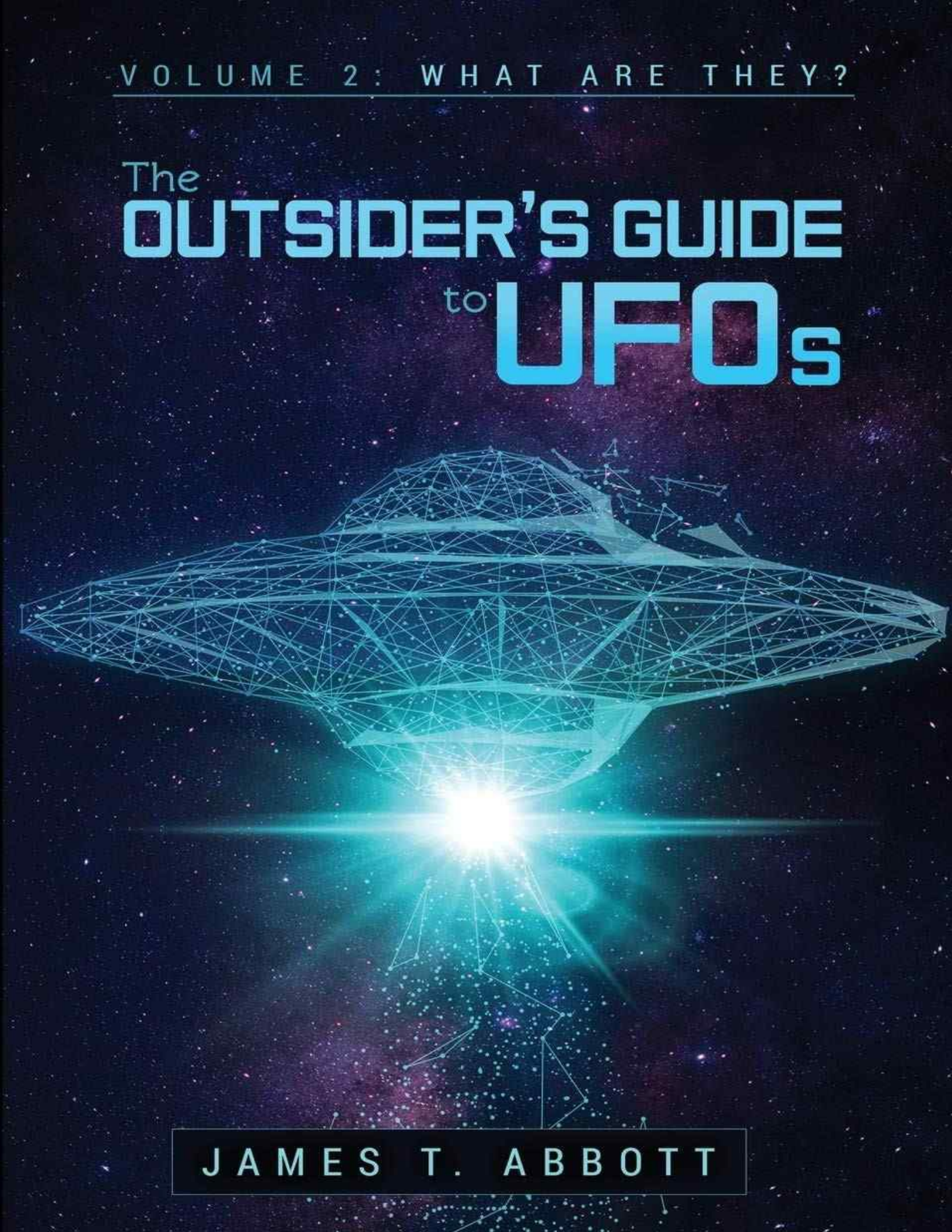
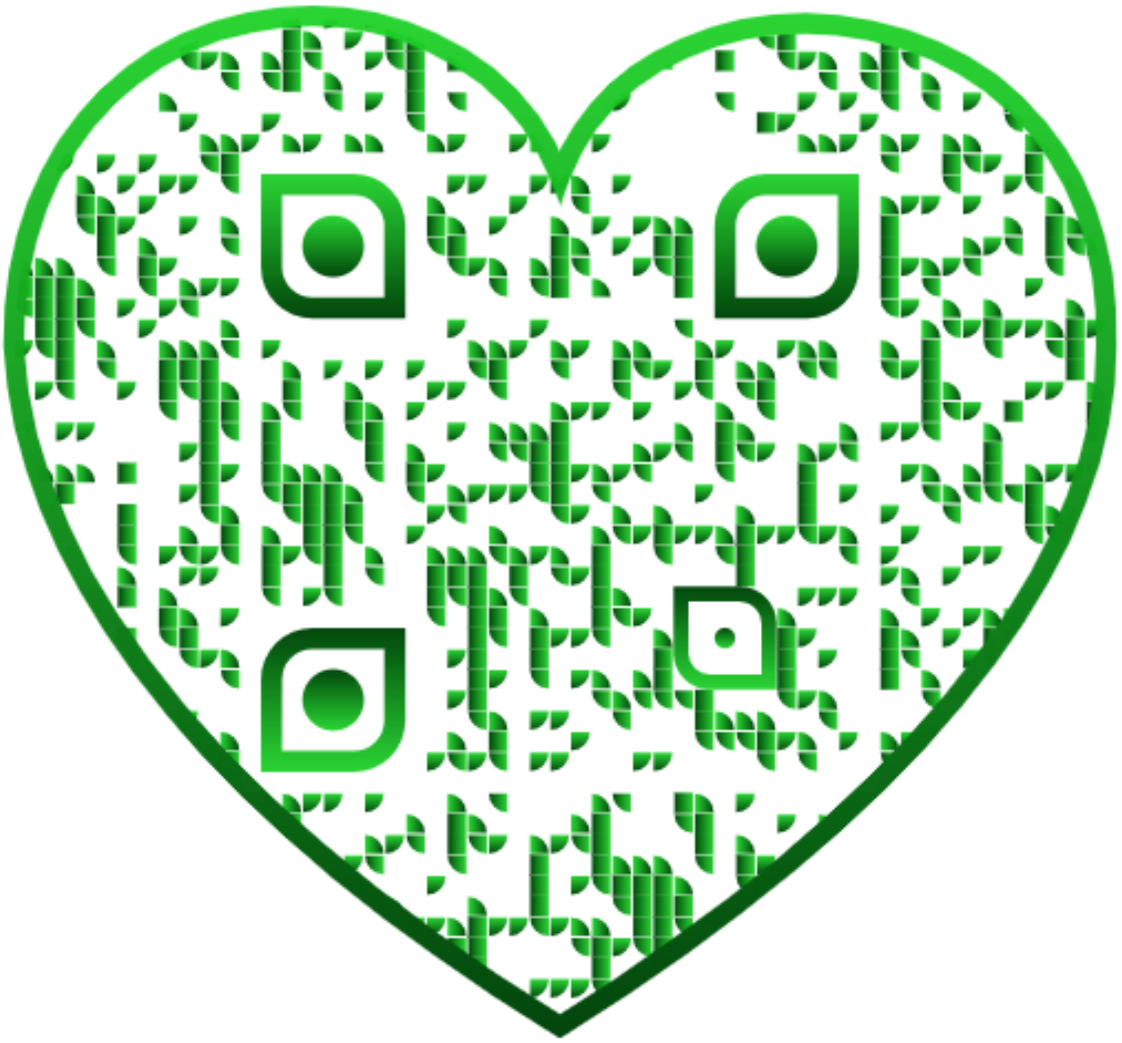
VOLUME 2: WHAT ARE THEY?

The OUTSIDER'S GUIDE to UFOs



JAMES T. ABBOTT



The Outsider's Guide to UFOs

Volume 2: What are they?

James T Abbott

Contents

Introduction

Part 1

Myth or Reality?

Chapter 1

From our Mole - 1

Chapter 2

The Story So Far

Chapter 3

A New Religion

Chapter 4

Film and Culture

Part 2

Normality

Chapter 5

From our Mole – 2

Chapter 6

Little & Large

Chapter 7

Shapes

Chapter 8

Lights and Beams

Chapter 9

Fast Swimmers

Chapter 10

The Game-Changer

Chapter 11

Are these objects real?

Part 3

Paranormality

Chapter 12

From our Mole - 3

Chapter 13:

Abductions & Mutilations

Chapter 14

Crop Circles

Chapter 15

Animal Mutilations

Chapter 16

Weird UFOs

Chapter 17

Feelings & Dimensions

Chapter 18

Strange Creatures

Part 4

Physics & Metaphysics

Chapter 19

From our Mole – 4

Chapter 20

Science & Consciousness

Chapter 21

Signposts in the Desert

Part 5

What are they?

Chapter 22

From our Mole – 5

Chapter 23

What we know and don’t know

Chapter 24

What does it mean?

Bibliography

Introduction

If it looks like a duck, swims like a duck and quacks like a duck
… it probably is a duck.

The Abductive Reasoning “Duck Test”

The Rule of Three:
Whatever good or bad you put into the world is returned to you threefold.

Ancient British and Anglo-Saxon Belief

Eighty-five to ninety-five percent of everything around us is a total mystery. Bear that in mind whenever you are tempted to say that something is impossible.

James T Abbott

As you read these words, another version of yourself is doing the same thing in a dimension so close that you would only be able to measure the distance in quantum terms. A billion versions of yourself are probably doing the same thing with only tiny differences between your world and theirs. But, even further into the infinite number of versions of yourself, another billion did not take the decision to read. Instead they chose to do something else. They are

perhaps watching TV, playing with the kids, or making a coffee. Even further away will be billions of copies living in worlds where the Russian Revolution failed, or where the American colonies never broke away from Great Britain, where it was the Chinese who first placed a man on the Moon, where Hitler invaded and conquered Britain before the US could join the war, or where technology was reined in by philosophy.

Those few introductory paragraphs are not science-fiction. It's virtually certain to be what is really happening. Top scientists now agree that the many-worlds, multiple dimensions view of our existence is the best and most mathematically-plausible explanation for what we are pleased to call "reality".

When I set out to write this book I never dreamed where the research would lead. In my innocence I thought that UFOs were the only anomaly worth focussing on and that everything else was just fairy tales and hysteria – unworthy of a serious piece of research. I was wrong. As the months and years rolled by, my investigations led me into wilder and wilder territory and, to my initial horror and after very stubborn resistance, I began to see the evidence of connections, the links between the UFO phenomenon and things that I laughed at a few years ago.

At times I wondered whether I was "going native"; being sucked naively into utterly irrational regions simply because there was a vague connection. But the logic-chain held. If the empirical evidence for UFOs is strong enough to convince me that the anomaly exists and needs investigating, then equally I should take note of the evidence around other aspects of the paranormal.

Incidentally, by "paranormal" in this book I simply mean anything which is outside the boundaries of our current understanding. Scientists always try to give the impression that anything it cannot explain, cannot exist. Like the ancient Druids – they think, they calculate and they declaim. Their word is

the truth and the only truth. Anything which lies outside that truth is disparaged as “paranormal”. The difference between my definition of the paranormal and that of most scientists is that mine is value-neutral. I do not take the word to have any negative or pejorative implications – it is simply “outside the normal”.

There are thousands upon thousands of credible sightings of UFOs and there are almost equal numbers of credible accounts of UFOs being associated with strange paranormal events. Yet, to paraphrase the inimitable Jacques Vallée, none of it makes sense. Why would anyone – whether an extra-terrestrial alien, dimensional visitor, or time-traveller, need to make so many visits, in so many different types of object, in such obvious ways? That it does not make sense is why sceptics discount the whole thing and, to an extent, who can blame them? But the illogical argument that, if something does not make sense it cannot exist, is the hallmark of sceptics and (some) scientists. Beware of people whose arguments are based on false premises or who skip logical steps in order to arrive at the conclusion they most desire.

The human race has at least one major virtue – its inquisitiveness. We keep nibbling at difficult problems until we solve them. Even when the priests and scientists keep telling us that there’s nothing there, we persist. Even when scientists told us that Newton’s idea of gravity was the very last word, we kept on digging and eventually came up with quantum physics. But the most profound question we keep asking is: are we alone?

Obviously, if we are alone in the immense infinity of the universe, there’s no chance that other civilisations could be sending UFOs to pester us (or at least the only possible visitors would be time-travelling versions of us from the future). Our established religions have always said (or strongly implied) that we are alone. We are the chosen ones for whom the Earth has been specially constructed. Until recently, the possibility that the Earth was the

only planet worth considering was rendered somewhat plausible by the likelihood that there could be no other “Earths”.

Yet, even in the infancy of the search for exo-planets we have discovered around five thousand in a tiny segment of the sky. Life, and especially intelligent life is another matter of course. There may be tens of thousands of planets out there, but they might all be like Mercury or Uranus – which we believe do not harbour life in any form. We can just about conceive of microbial life existing on other planets, but sentient creatures? Highly sophisticated life forms may be a good deal rarer.

The question is fundamental to any discussion of paranormal anomalies on this planet. If there is absolutely no chance that a super-advanced civilisation can exist in the rest of the universe, we can all get back to our knitting. So, how about trying a logic chain?

The observable universe is, nowhere near the entire universe – because we can only “see” the parts from which light has had time to reach us in around 9 billion years. It contains somewhere around a billion, trillion galaxies (give or take ten or twenty). That’s a one with twenty-one zeros behind it!

The average galaxy might contain a billion stars (our own probably contains one hundred billion). So, conservatively speaking, the observable universe contains stars to the tune of (at least) one with thirty zeros.

Many stars may not possess planets, and a good few will have nine or ten or even more. If we make an arbitrary and very conservative assumption that the average star has just three planets, the observable universe possesses planets in the amount of (roughly) three with thirty

zeros.

If we now assume that only one planet in a million will have even microbial life on it, we get life-bearing planets equal to three with twenty-four zeros.

A further assumption might be that only one in a million of those "microbial" planets possesses developed life forms (like mammals, reptiles, dinosaurs, birds, fish, etc). The total of those planets would be three with eighteen zeros

Then we should estimate the planets with reasonably advanced sentient life forms (e.g. Earth). Let's say only one in a million planets with developed life forms ever gets to host reasonably sophisticated sentient life. We're now down to three with twelve zeros. That's three trillion planets with life as "advanced" as our own.

And finally, let's assume that only one in a million of those planets ever develops a civilisation that is far in advance of ours on Earth. That gives us three with six zeros of super-advanced civilisations.

What we've just estimated – from some very conservative assumptions – is that the universe probably contains three trillion planets with life forms as developed as we are, and that *three million* very advanced civilisations could well exist out there somewhere. That's *three million* planets hosting highly sophisticated species, some of which may be millions of years ahead of us in developmental terms.

The great physicist Enrico Fermi proposed a paradox about all this. If, he argued, there were all these advanced civilisations out there, why had none of them apparently visited the Earth? I think the answer to Signor Fermi is (very respectfully): Who says they haven't visited?

The results of the logic chain are sobering even though they do not take into account the number of reasonably advanced civilisations which may destroy themselves! The observable universe is so huge that, even if you make the assumptions ultra-tough by assuming that only one in a thousand advanced species ever make it to the next stage, it is close to impossible that there exist fewer than several thousand super-advanced civilisations. We'll deal with the question of how they found us, later.

And, should you wonder how they've managed to get so advanced, you should remember that the universe is around 13,800 million years old (13.8 billion), that the Earth, formed around 4.5 billion years after the universe began, and has only been around for 4.5 billion years. The nine billion years between the "beginning" and now mean that there are huge parts of the observable universe that are between four and five *thousand million* years older than us. Even in the "near" Universe, there are stars and planets a few million or even a billion years older than ours.

Humanity can trace its evolution back for around one million years (sharks are sixty million years old) but there appears to have been a massive shift in our intellectual capability leading to modern homo-sapiens about 300,000 years ago. A crucial leap in our development may have occurred as little as 50,000 years ago, with the development of symbolic representation. Civilisations that could be called "modern" – ones which possessed writing and mathematics – seem to have arisen around 9,000 years ago (although there may have been earlier ones).

But the most important leaps in human development have occurred over

the past three hundred years – through the agricultural, industrial, and digital revolutions (that's one three-thousandth of our history as a species). Think how far humanity has come in just two hundred years; from crude steam engines to interplanetary rockets; from laboriously hand-set newspapers with engraved images to the Internet; from the earliest of hand-driven washing machines to household robots; from crude mechanical calculating machines to quantum computers. How far ahead of us would be a civilisation that is thousands or millions of years our senior?

Whereas only a hundred years ago mankind reposed in comfortable ignorance, today we are beginning to recognise that the possibility of highly intelligent life somewhere else in the universe has a probability so high as to be virtually certain. Our only comfort blanket is that provided by the late-great Albert Einstein. If nothing can travel faster than light, then no-one from galaxies thousands of light years away will bother to visit lil ol' Earth.

If you wrap yourself several times in that particular comfort-blanket, you can continue to live your solid, comfortable life, firm in your current beliefs.

Or you can carry on reading this book.

But if you do, be prepared to have the foundations of your existence thoroughly shaken. Your faith in being able to tell what is possible and what is impossible is going to be shattered forever.

And that's a good question to begin our journey. What exactly is "impossible" in this universe? Let's see … it's impossible for anything to be in more than one place at the same time. It's impossible for anything to communicate faster than the speed of light. It's impossible for light to travel faster than the speed of light. It is not possible to have a rocket engine which has no propellant. It's impossible for light to be tied in knots. It's impossible for anything to be invisible. It's impossible for light to be stopped in its tracks in a vacuum.

I could go on, but you get the picture. The items above are just a few of the long list of things which, even a few years ago, we thought were utterly impossible. But they are not. Every single one of them has been demonstrated in the laboratory and, I would guess, will have fascinating uses which are even now being developed by the boffins. The propellant-less rocket engine, for example, received a British patent in 2017.

Modern humans are not alone in having a firm list of apparently impossible things. All of the following were once deemed “impossible” by eminent scientists: travel at speeds over 30mph, heavier-than-air flight, radio, meteorites, x-rays, the atomic bomb, rockets operating in space, black holes, relativity, and a great deal more. Scientists are, to put it bluntly, hopeless at assessing what is and is not possible.

Science and engineering are now progressing at an unprecedented pace and the barriers of the “impossible” are being breached every year. As we explore quantum physics and string-theory (now more properly called M-Theory) scientists are finding that the world and the universe are far weirder than they’d ever imagined and that even more things that they once believed impossible are now eminently possible.

The object of this volume in the “Outsider’s Guide” series is to shift the focus away from examining whether there are such things as inexplicable UFOs (there most certainly are) towards a serious initial appraisal of *what* they are. In Volume 1 I discussed more than forty of the best sightings from the twentieth century. I showed that extremely credible people witness incredible things on a frequent basis. That has not changed in the twenty-first century. Across the world there could be upwards of 6,000 *totally inexplicable* sightings every year. In this new volume I’m going to showcase over seventy of the most credible cases of UFOs in recent times and then discuss their possible association with other aspects of the paranormal.

What is causing UFOs? Why do people see them in the way they do? Are UFOs related to the weirder aspects of the paranormal? A small proportion of UFO enthusiasts hate it when people like me start talking about things like shape-changers, apparitions, monsters, and the “many worlds” theory. From their point of view such topics undermine the mechanical credibility of spaceship UFOs.

I understand. UFO investigators give huge amounts of their own time, energy, and money, to look into what appear to them to be real things. They have spent decades developing rigorous investigative systems akin to those used by the FAA or the CAA when investigating air crashes. They do not want that rational, scientific approach defiled by talk of goblins, monsters and psychics.

I get all that. But what I will add is that many UFO enthusiasts are in denial. They shy away from the wilder side of things even when objects are clearly associated with them. As I’ll try to show towards the end of this book, I don’t think that’s a sustainable strategy. In fact, like a few authors before me, I have come to the conclusion that the subject requires a far more substantial shift in human thought than a few scientific experiments.

See what *you* think.

Part 1

Myth or Reality?

The flash of light you saw in the sky was not a UFO. Swamp gas from a weather balloon was trapped in a thermal pocket and reflected the light from Venus.

> Scott Palmer (gloriously tongue-in-cheek about a sighting in West Auckland, New Zealand). Social media post reported in Newshub, April 6, 2019.

In 1970 when I was about 13 years old my family saw a thing in the sky, near us, no noise at all, wobbled, even stood still. I am 61 years old now, still has an impact on me like yesterday, never seen anything like it since in almost 50 years.

> Contributor to the Outsider's Guide Facebook page; June 2018.

Chapter 1

From our Mole - 1

"Where are we navigator?" The thought came as a single "word" which was answered instantly in the same manner.

"Precisely on track, sir. Mission objective on the screens now. Speed dead-slow at 10,000 mph and planetary altitude about 50,000 feet. Can we de-cloak and light up?".

The Captain gave the matter half a second's consideration before the response. "Affirmative. Let's use the green glow, the humming noise, and yellow overall with pulsating blue and red bands."

"Visible to their radar?"

"Ah … yes, but only until they start sending up those silly "planes" of theirs. That particular game gets a bit tiresome after a while."

"Aye, Captain, and can we zip about a bit and change colours frequently? The ship likes to do that?"

Another affirmative answer instantly caused the ship to enter a random-flight mode which had been agreed several minutes earlier as they'd entered the planet's atmosphere. At that point, a third thought-band intruded on the command conversation. It was their newest crew member – a relatively inexperienced male of around three hundred Earth years. The thoughts were hesitant, and the Captain briefly considered reprimanding him. However, the ship advised not. "It's a learning curve, sir", it murmured.

"Ah, Captain. Should we not maintain our cloak and keep the lights off? Otherwise, the Earthlings will see us, and our mission objectives may be compromised."

It had been a long time since the new recruit had sensed so much mirth

from his two older colleagues. The amusement of the ship itself was also unprecedented. Waves of hilarity flooded through his mind before the Captain responded.

"Good gracious, no. We've been using lights and lots of random shapes and movement longer than you've been out of the hatchery. The Earthlings love it. They point and stare, and you can feel their bafflement and fear as we pass near their primitive dwellings and air vehicles. Then they send their ungainly military airplanes to "chase" us. Goodness, I haven't had so much fun in eons. I think we'll use the cigar shape with four little rods sticking out – we haven't used that shape in the past five missions, so it'll be good to feel the Earthlings' reactions."

There was a hint of doubt remaining in the rookie's mind, so the Captain added a burst of further explanation. The whole conversation had taken an excruciatingly long two seconds, but she felt it was worth the waste of time.

"Remember that, in any event, the poor creatures don't believe their own eyes. You should also remember those beings on Rigel Seven. It took them fifty thousand years to work it all out. The Earthlings have only had a few thousand, but they are already beginning to come up with some good ideas. They're still a long way off the mark, but nevertheless showing dim signs of intelligence. No, we carry on with our work and we keep doing the circus act at the same time. It's fun for us and its fun for them. I really enjoy the waves of emotion we get when we do a low, slow pass or a hover. Even better when we do a close pass on one of those laughable contraptions they call airliners. Sit back and enjoy it … and thank your lucky stars that you were hatched into an advanced civilisation and not that stone age mess down there."

Chapter 2

The Story So Far

[I] got the fright of my life because there appeared to be, smack in front of the aeroplane [at fifteen thousand feet], three white, or nearly white, circular objects. Two of them were on a level keel, and one of them was canted at a slight angle, to one side.

Flight Lieutenant Michael Swiney (RAF), 1952

In Volume 1 of *The Outsider's Guide to UFOs* I showcased some of the most spectacular and credible UFO sightings of all time – from the airships sighted over the USA and England in the late 1890s and early 1900s, and one man's sighting of strange lights in 1914 Croydon, to the waves of sightings in the Hudson Valley, Phoenix, Belgium, and the UK through the latter years of the twentieth and the early years of the twenty-first century.

Those of you who have read Volume One will know much of what follows in this chapter, but, for the sake of those who have not had the opportunity to peruse the first treatise, here is a single-chapter, potted history.

The UFO phenomenon of may have begun much earlier than the beginning of the twentieth century – there are interesting photos on the web from the mid-nineteenth century and accounts going back to at least the end of the eighteenth century. But the story really began with the advent of the

telephone. The comparative lack of UFO reports through most of the Victorian age is not surprising or necessarily significant. If during those years, and it is a big if, the numbers of UFO sightings were proportional to modern levels, it is plain to see why people did not report them. Religion may have been a powerful disincentive to reporting unusual heavenly objects and lights. But simple embarrassment and the hassle of writing relatively expensive letters might have been far more important. The chances of derision and disbelief would have been extremely high. Much better to simply keep the whole thing to oneself and put it down to scoffing too much tiffin.

By the 1890s, however, the postal services were much improved. The early telephones, much more convenient communication devices, were becoming available. Reports of UFOs were still at very low levels but at least it was far easier to send a quick letter or telegram, or even to telephone the local newspaper or the police station.

Hundreds of people reported strange, lighted “airships” in the skies across the United States and Britain around the turn of the twentieth century. Captain Edward Ruppelt, the author of one of the first and best books on the whole UFO subject[1], actually spoke with a man who had seen an airship above 1890s San Francisco (see Volume 1). In Britain, in 1909, a police officer, PC Kettle, saw one over Peterborough which was part of a much wider set of sightings in the weeks that followed.

In the years which saw the nineteenth become the twentieth century these “airship” sightings were not confined to Britain and the US. Between 1899 and 1902 the Boers (Dutch in origin) in what is now South Africa fought the British in a ferocious and highly skilled attempt to attain independence and, effectively, take over most, if not all, of the colony. There were two “Boer Wars”. The first (1880-1881) was called a “rebellion” at the time but was

very successful for the Boers of the Transvaal. They gave the British a terrible drubbing at the Battle of Majuba Hill in 1881 and won the independence of that province. The second war, between 1899 and 1902) undid the gains of the first one. It was much more serious and, although it almost succeeded, it ended in the defeat of the Boer cause. At first the Boers were able to fight pitched battles and did quite well, but numbers and resources eventually told. By the end of the war, they were fighting what we now know as a guerrilla war. The war led to British control of most of southern Africa but, more to the point, in the context of UFOs – it was a major venue for the sighting of "airships".

In spite of the fact that airships were very much at the prototype stage in Germany, Britain and the US, soldiers on both sides during the Second Boer War saw many aerial objects which they described as airships – some of them with lights.

> *Airship with powerful light plainly visible from here in far off distance towards Dundee. Telegraphist at Paulpietersburg also spied one, and at Amsterdam three in the direction of Zambaansland to the south east*[2].
>
> From the Boer newspaper "Vryheid".

By my count that's at least four and possible five fully operational "airships" of which at least one possessed a powerful light. And these at a time when early prototypes were flying in Europe and the States.

These "airships" and those in the UK and in the USA *could*, of course, have been man-made airships but for three very telling reasons. Firstly, the timing was wrong. As I showed in Volume One, early airships were either not flying in the given localities or could not have been flown in them for

security reasons. Many were seen travelling at speed and under “perfect control” but the speeds at which they were reported as travelling were simply too fast for the painfully slow and cumbersome airships of even a few decades later. Finally, it was impossible for them to carry the heavy generators and searchlights they were reported as using. Only towards the end of the First World War were German Zeppelins capable of carrying searchlights.

There were plenty of strange things reported during the 1920s and 1930s but people’s minds during the latter decade were largely taken up with what is now known as the Great Depression. Few sightings were investigated or corroborated in any meaningful sense. As can be expected, the newspapers exaggerated and sensationalised any sighting so it’s impossible at this distance in time to be sure that any of the reports were credible.

It was mainly behind the closed doors of the armed forces that UFOs plagued us during the Second World War. From 1939 through 1945 airmen in every fighting nation saw and reported globes, lights, cylinders, fireballs, and discs tracking their aircraft. This five or six-year wave of sightings was as complex and fascinating as any modern wave, but it was not reported outside the armed forces and got itself tagged with a comical name which did nothing to help the people who might have tried to examine it in a more serious and scientific manner. The sightings did not seem to present any threat to aircraft, whether German, Japanese, British or American, so the top brass of the respective air-forces decided to do nothing about them. The Allies thought they were machines invented by the Germans or the Japanese, and the Axis nations thought the exact opposite.

Some of the sightings were quite spectacular and – whatever they were – they certainly scared the living daylights out of some aircrews. They were unidentifiable, but the Americans gave them a name. During the war itself

they were known as "*those f*****g foo-fighters*". After hostilities ceased and the phenomenon became better known in civilian circles their title was abbreviated to just "foo-fighters". Most were balls of light which appeared to follow or accompany bomber formations. Sometimes the balls of light were said to have actually passed through the aircraft.

The tendency these days is to assume that all foo-fighters were balls of light but those ferocious years were also replete with reports of what we might call "standard" shapes - cylindrical or cigar-shaped, discs, and even wedges. Some were very similar to those which are reported by modern airline pilots.

The war was hardly over before the networks of wartime alliances broke up and everyone picked a new side. On the side of the allies during the war, the Soviet Union quickly became a bitter enemy, while almost all the Axis partners transmuted themselves into future allies and friends. The process took a few years but, by the early 1950s, the shape of international rivalries for the next eighty years was clear. On one side stood the nations of the USSR, the Warsaw Pact, and China who all adopted a form of communist government and believed the western nations were out to get them. On the other side were lined up the United States, the United Kingdom, NATO (including Germany and Italy), and Japan who all lived by a more open, democratic system, and who believed the communists were out to get them. Each side eventually boasted thousands of nuclear weapons and millions of soldiers, sailors and airmen under arms. Quite what either side thought they would gain by nuclear war was never made terribly clear, and the shadow of that ultimate catastrophe is still with us.

The geo-political earthquake that followed World War Two also prompted years of suspicion as to the origins of UFOs. Indeed, there is an argument that the immediate post-war tension, in which both sides anticipated a massive

pre-emptive strike by the other, may have been directly responsible for the secrecy surrounding UFOs and the extreme caution with which the US and British governments treated the whole subject.

So-called ghost rockets and other objects were reported in northern Europe in the late 1940s and early 1950s which, together with well-publicised US sightings, prompted the British Government to set up the *Flying Saucer Working Party* and the US government to establish an investigative body known as *Project Sign*. These were the first of many official initiatives designed to evaluate and monitor UFO sightings. All of them endured until "freedom of information" laws caused them to be closed down. In the United States, three successive UFO investigations – *Projects Sign*, *Grudge*, and *Blue Book* – operated until the late 1960s, while in the UK the Ministry of Defence continued to take note, and conduct simple assessments of UFO sightings from the early 1950s right through to 2009. In both cases it seems plausible that the pressures on official time and other resources, caused by each nation's Freedom of Information Acts, led directly to the investigative efforts (such as they were) being closed down. In the US and the UK reams of information on the subject have been released into the public domain; although it must be said that almost no-one believes that either government ever stopped investigating UFOs.

Until after the war, the reporting of UFOs by the newspapers was sporadic. Indeed, the foo-fighter sightings got virtually no publicity at all. But then, in 1947, all that changed forever. For reasons which would probably make an excellent PhD thesis, one sighting suddenly ignited the whole shebang.

In the summer of 1947, the barrel of UFO gunpowder, which had been sitting quietly in the corner for probably a century or more, suddenly exploded. It was the day an airman named Kenneth Arnold was flying in the Cascade Mountains in the US Pacific North-West. He woke up that morning

a fairly ordinary local businessman and aviator and went to bed that night with his name immortalised and his testimony the centre of everlasting controversy. The reasons why the Arnold sighting lit the UFO fuse are difficult to fully understand. They may have had something to do with previous UFO sightings across the nation in that year, but that single sighting, of nine wedge-shaped objects flying through the mountains, prompted a huge wave of global publicity and introduced the whole world to the “flying saucer”. Arnold had described the movement of the objects as being similar to a saucer skipping over a pond and he most definitely said that what they actually looked like were delta wedges or boomerangs. Nevertheless, the boys of the press dubbed them “flying saucers” and that’s what they have been called ever since.

Arnold’s squadron of UFOs was also seen by a prospector named Johnson, but the world did not find out about the corroborating sighting for quite a while. Instead, and while the furore was ongoing, people in the US south-west also began seeing things in the sky that were not easy to explain. Down in the desert, very near some of the most sensitive military and scientific bases in the world, people were reporting strange things in the air.

Roswell is a town in New Mexico, quite near the US bases of Alamogordo, White Sands, and Holloman. In that region of the world, in the late 1940s, the nuclear arms race was just getting into its stride amid spy scandals and war fears. The town had what was then an Army Air Force base (USAAF) and, doubtless, its commanding officer was well-aware of the steady stream of “flying saucer” sightings which were then being aired by an excited (and excitable) local press.

The sceptics argue that the river of UFO “hysteria” was in full spate in 1947 and that it caused a large number of what they would see as “one-upmanship” sightings. None of them, however, can explain how those

sightings began if it was all “hysteria”. It is still a matter of intense controversy, but one thing is absolutely certain: *something* happened near Roswell in July 1947 and it caused the commander of the USAAF base at Roswell to issue a press release which, eventually, made the Kenneth Arnold explosion look like a damp squib.

The Roswell story is lengthy and complex and we cannot deal with it here (Volume 1 contains a more detailed overview), but it is worth pointing out that it is the very early stages of the event which, in many ways, carry the most force. The USAAF “explained” the affair very quickly (as a mis-identified weather balloon, and then as a secret spy-balloon), so Roswell did not become a UFO cause-célèbre until the 1970s, when a detailed account of the incident emerged from one of the key participants in the original events. Major Jesse Marcel “came out” and told the world what he thought had happened. From that point on, Roswell blossomed into one of the most fiercely-fought battlegrounds in UFO history. During the early stages, though, something happened which, I strongly suspect, is fundamental to understanding the whole thing.

The Roswell story hinges on whether one or more flying saucers crashed, whether alien bodies were recovered, whether alien material from the crashed saucers was recovered and secreted away, and whether the US air force subsequently covered everything up. The battle lines, today, are well defined. On one side stand hosts of UFO buffs who steadfastly believe that all those things happened and that the US government now stands possessed of alien bodies and (at the least) bits of flying saucers. On the other, the US government and many agencies, plus a swarm of sceptics, pooh-pooh the whole thing and imply that anyone on the other side is a nutter and goes to bed wearing a tin-foil hat. But, for me, the most important aspect of the whole, forty-year imbroglio happened on the day after Major Jesse

Marcel brought some bits of whatever he'd found out at the distant "crash site" back to Roswell USAAF base.

For that is when the commander of the base dictated, and gave permission for the release of, a press statement full of the word "disc" and saying that one had been retrieved and had been "loaned" to Headquarters. Don't forget that the weeks and months which led up to that fateful day were filled with press and radio accounts of local people seeing things in the sky which they could not explain. The full text of the press release is in Volume 1 but suffice it to say that, in it, Colonel Blanchard explicitly stated that the discovery of the disc had confirmed all the previous rumours and that it had been recovered by his men. The press release, which mentions the word "disc" three times, was dictated to his press officer, Lieutenant Walter Haut, and sent out to local papers and radio stations.

Colonel Blanchard did not need to do this. If he'd wanted to say that UFOs do not exist and that what "crashed" near Roswell was a weather balloon, he could simply have said so. Instead it took a second press release the next day for the air force to "correct" the story and inform the excited world that, actually, the thing had been a weather balloon.

An announcement of the capture of a supposedly extra-terrestrial craft was (and remains) one that only the President could make, but Blanchard was never penalised for his wild, embarrassing decision. Instead his career continued serenely on an upward trajectory until he eventually became a senior General.

For me, that single action, which is absolute fact because the press release and the news articles it prompted are in the public domain, rings more alarm bells than all the other hype about Roswell put together. It shouts out, louder than any subsequent revelations, that the press release was a hare, set deliberately running by the US authorities to distract the public from

something else. It could have been a double-bluff. The authorities find bits of a crashed alien craft, decide that the best strategy is to muddy the waters, and set in train a series of announcements, denials, and counter-announcements to completely confuse everyone. But people who argue this forget that the Roswell story died a death on the publication of the “weather balloon” story within days of the original discovery. The authorities did not need an elaborate double bluff. All they needed was to let the whole thing evaporate. When Marcel came forward with a new story in the 70s it would be been his word against theirs if it hadn’t been for that pesky press-release which stamped “Official” over the flying saucer story.

So why did Col. Blanchard not immediately release the weather balloon story and calm everything down. The only possible reason for this would be that too many of his officers and men had already been involved in gathering bits of the crashed object and that the press release was as much to fool them as it was to fool the general public.

Major Marcel, who was the officer sent to collect the debris, was later left in fuming anger when he went to HQ, saw the items he’d delivered there, was distracted for a while in another room and, when he returned, found bits of a weather balloon laid out for the press. He said he was then ordered to go with the weather balloon story.

Within days of the Roswell incident the claims and counter-claims, bluffs and double-bluffs were already stacking up. They’ve been multiplying ever since! But still, everything hangs on that press release – was it, as Nick Redfern thinks, a distraction from a much more sinister story in which the US government was the black-hatted villain who caused something to crash?

**

While many people still seem to believe that UFOs are entirely an American invention, the fact is they have been experienced all over the world for at least the past eighty years. In the UK, in the late 1940s and early 50s, there were numerous sightings, many of which were by the military, some of which appeared on radar. Two of the most persuasive events, which were dismissed very quickly by the authorities and yet were still kept secret, were those which occurred at the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough in 1950. RAE Farnborough was, and still is, a test pilot flying centre par excellence. Test pilots from all over the world are still trained there to this day. In 1950 a skilled and highly experienced RAF test pilot by the name of Stan Hubbard saw a very strange object which wobbled in the sky and then flew straight over where he was standing. A couple of weeks later he and others saw a similar object “fluttering” in the distance. In spite of the official put-downs about “misperceptions” a veil of secrecy was thrown over the whole affair, and Hubbard and others were told to keep their mouths shut. Stan Hubbard was adamant in his testimony and remained so until his death. With eyesight and experience such as his, how many of us is really qualified to gainsay him?

There have been so many highly credible UFO sightings that it is impossible to discuss them all, so this summary focusses on just the most compelling. One such set of sightings occurred in Washington DC and the surrounding areas in 1952. It was such a major “flap” that a US Air Force Intelligence general felt obliged to give a press conference, at which event most of the world’s press were present. There are a couple of aspects of the 1952 flap worth mentioning here. Unidentified objects were seen over the Capitol and the central Washington area both visually and on radar. Fighters were scrambled, and photos exist of pilots being interviewed by the press after returning to base following unsuccessfully chases of objects. The

Washington Post carried several articles on the sightings, some of which mentioned how difficult it was for the fighters to get close to the objects.

In addition, the lights and objects were seen visually and on radar from what was then Washington National Airport and were reported by several airline pilots as they flew into and out of the airport. The Washington events of 1952 and 1953 were real. So many observers saw things that the military reacted. So many *pilots* saw things that the press printed a string of lurid articles. The testimony of the two main witnesses at Washington National is so persuasive that, to this day, no-one has convincingly been able to explain them away. Those two witnesses – Harold Cocklin and Harry Barnes – were subjected to intense criticism and derision but both went to their graves holding fast to their stories.

The 1950s produced a string of highly credible UFO reports on both sides of the pond. During the military Operations Mainbrace and Ardent in the UK in 1952, over Carson Sink in 1952, at Rapid City in 1953, near London, England in 1953, by the Canadian Air Force pilot R J Childerhose in 1956, and at the USAF bases of RAF Bentwaters and Lakenheath in 1956, to name but a handful.

UFO reports kept coming in to organisations and authorities across the globe during the 1960s and 70s and some were nothing short of spectacular. One such was the testimony of police officer Lonnie Zamora in 1964. Chasing a speeding motorist he broke off to investigate a flash from across the hills. He thought it might have been an accident at a dynamite shed which lay in that area. When his car reached the approximate spot, he found what, at first, he thought was a car in trouble with two small adults beside it. Instead it turned out to be something that frightened him down to his regulation boots. He lost sight of the “car” for a moment as he tried to get closer. When he saw it again, the people had disappeared and the “car” was taking off vertically at

speed. In spite of lengthy and cruel derision, Zamora is another who never changed his testimony. The authorities – including one of the most sceptical leaders of Project Blue Book – have never been able to convincingly explain-away Zamora's experience.

Among many others, the year 1965 produced two very different but equally fascinating incidents – one from France and the other from Exeter, New Hampshire. In Valensole, in the south of France, a farmer had an experience remarkably similar to that of Lonnie Zamora. He found a strange object in one of his lavender fields and encountered a being who apparently paralysed him temporarily and then took off in the object. The French Gendarmerie investigated the affair at length and thoroughly confirmed the farmer's honesty, but never arrived at a satisfactory explanation.

Four thousand miles away, an eighteen-year-old inhabitant of Exeter, NH, was hiking home early one morning from his girlfriend's house when he came across a set of bright red lights which illuminated trees and houses and which, at one point, "came at him". You'd be forgiven for thinking he'd been drinking but he hadn't. He managed to get a lift to a police station and, when he returned to the spot in an officer's police cruiser, that officer, too, saw the object and the lights. It evidently approached them both and the police officer was so concerned he drew his gun. And if that isn't enough, the object was seen by a third witness – another police officer – who came upon the scene. Norman Muscarello – the young man in this story – also stuck to his guns to the end of his days and so did the two policemen.

In the late 60s and early 70s there were numerous accounts of UFOs interfering with US ICBM missiles and their bases. In one incident the guards were alleged to have fired at a UFO until all their ammunition was expended.

In December 1980 there occurred the famous Rendlesham Forest incidents, in the UK, in which USAF enlisted personnel and non-commissioned officers

found a small UFO sitting in an East Anglian clearing. It eventually flew away, but not before one man had noted the markings on its side and placed his hand on it. A couple of nights later a USAF Lieutenant Colonel named Charles Halt led a large team of men out into the freezing darkness on reports of more strange activity. What then happened is still unexplained. Halt and his men saw objects in the sky moving very rapidly and erratically and beams of light coming down from the objects. Uniquely, Halt made a voice recording of the events which is available on the Internet. The controversy about Rendlesham is as active and vitriolic as that about Roswell but Col. Halt maintains his story to this day and, like Lt Walter Haut of Roswell fame, has also deposed his account under oath to a legal notary.

After that, the eighties saw no letting up in the frequency and credibility of UFO sightings. During that decade the sheer volume of sightings begins to focus the enquiring mind on the more credible observers such as airline pilots and other trained observers. Senior and experienced pilots saw very strange things, and TWA and JAL pilots, among many others, made stunning reports. The 1980s were also graced by another strange French incident at Trans-en-Provence, the famous Hudson Valley wave of sightings, and an amazing sighting by Portuguese military pilots of an object which circled their planes and stopped dead in mid-air.

Finally, the 1990s saw the highly-debated sightings and video evidence from the Belgian wave, from Phoenix Arizona, from multiple sightings in England (e.g. Cosford), and the sighting by the crew of Air France flight 3532.

**

As you will readily appreciate, seeing things in the sky is not unusual, and almost all of what people see in the air above them is explainable. Everyone

has the capacity to be fooled by things they see. Optical illusions are a fact of life, as any car driver knows. The road can appear to be bending one way and actually goes the other, the hill can be a lot steeper than it looks, the car coming towards you in the desert heat can appear much closer than it actually is. Similarly, in the skies above us, we can be fooled by planets low down in the sky which are magnified by the atmosphere and, in the evening, given a deep red glow, we can imagine that a sun-dog is a brightly-lit object floating in the sky. We can see a group of UFOs scurrying through the upper atmosphere when, in reality, it is a rocket breaking up (Volume 1 contains a longer treatment of the possible reasons why people see things that they do not understand).

There are numerous ways observers can be wrong in what they think they see. But, as we saw in Volume One, there is always a small proportion of sightings – probably between about 5 percent and as much as 10 percent – for which rational explanations fail. These are the truly inexplicable events, the ones which absolutely have to be explained if we are to get to the bottom of the UFO phenomenon. They are also, to anyone who is not a hard-boiled sceptic, the credible ones – the inexplicable 5% which underpin around 6,000 such sightings across the globe every year.

But there are a number of informed people who believe that UFOs may be a modern myth. Dr David Clarke in Britain is one such person and he has a number of fellow-travellers in the US, Canada and Australia. Their case is superficially persuasive and it certainly bears detailed consideration.

Chapter 3

A New Religion

It can't be a UFO because UFOs don't exist.

> Police officer responding to a witness phone call during the Hudson Valley sightings in the 1980s. Reported in Allen Hynek's *Night Siege*

Roughly 70 percent of the US and UK populations "believe" in UFOs. At least half, and possibly more, believe they are extra-terrestrial. But that, and the fact that thousands of people see UFOs every year, is not enough to prove that they are real. Certain observers are sceptical of the whole thing. They believe they can "prove" that it is simply a myth, an adult fairy tale which has become embedded in our culture over the past century or so. This is an important possibility that I did not address in detail in the first volume, but which is overdue for a serious review.

For many years, sceptics have argued that people see things in the sky because they are influenced by a fictitious cultural narrative which is embedded so deeply in modern societies that it has become part of what we expect, part of our belief structure. For example, many people love the idea of time travel. It's not a fact at present but the desire is extremely powerful to see "for real" other times. The sceptics argue that our desire to believe in extra-terrestrials and UFOs is of equal power, that it is based on equivalent fictional stimuli (films, books, etc.) and that it leads us to see things where

there is nothing and to interpret virtually anything that is strange as other-worldly. It's a very convenient rationale because it can explain away virtually anything that people say they see or experience. That does not automatically make it wrong, but it should certainly put us on our guard.

From the 1950s onwards, these sceptics argue that the myth has been supported and expanded by the media. Newspapers, radio and TV publicise lurid stories because they attract the paying public. But the main culprit as far as the sceptics are concerned is the cinema. They are pretty sure that UFO sightings increase following the release of certain movies and that, when people see something they cannot immediately identify in the sky, their brains link it to films they've seen and they leap to the conclusion that it is an extra-terrestrial spacecraft.

It's a powerful argument. Expose a section of society to a stream of exciting sightings and the chances are that a few people will then interpret whatever they see in the sky in line with that publicity. But it is also arguable that the effect is temporary and that the myth does not explain any initial sightings which prompted the publicity in the first place. If by "myth" one means the tendency of modern citizens to interpret unidentified things in line with the long tradition of UFOs, then that is probably unarguable, but that does not necessarily mean that the whole phenomenon is myth-driven.

Essentially therefore, the argument about UFOs as a myth is that people see UFOs because they watch movies and TV shows and read books (like this one) which put ideas, shapes, characteristics, and so on, into their heads. Generally, the argument goes, this process is supported by the internet, printed media, and by the news channels which are expert in turning a popular misconception into advertising revenue.

Several decades apart, Philip Klass in the US and David Clarke in the UK are good examples of the theory's proponents. Their arguments rest on the

supposed power of the media to drive the whole UFO phenomenon. It's a cogent theory which can be argued as far back as the early science fiction books by Jules Verne and H G Wells in the mid to late nineteenth century. Books like *From the Earth to the Moon* in 1865 and *War of the Worlds* in 1897[3] set the Victorians' minds racing on the subject of space flight and alien visitations, leading directly, some say, to the earliest sightings of "airships" in the skies of America and Britain. Films about alien creatures and invasions from Mars then led to the gradual build-up of flying saucer hysteria after the end of World War Two.

In the following decades, a steady diet of sci-fi movies during the 1950s and 1960s embedded the concept in people's minds and, to cut a long story short, we have never looked back. Stir into the pot blockbuster movies and long-running TV sci-fi serials and, the sceptics propose, it is no surprise that the more gullible citizens of the world keep seeing things and reporting them as extra-terrestrial spacecraft with little green – or grey – men inside them. We have all been so brain-washed by the media that we now bring the myth with us whatever we do and wherever we are. The sceptics' arguments sound extremely plausible, but deeper thought exposes them as fragile generalisations.

One would expect, if the myth theory holds water, that reports of sightings would always be reports of "UFOs" – alien spacecraft on whatever nefarious business the galactic overlords have sent them to conduct. But, read any list of sighting reports on any of the major UFO websites (or look back at Project Blue Book or the UK Ministry of Defence records), and you'll be impressed, not by the hysterical descriptions of Martians and space saucers but by just how many people *do not* interpret what they are seeing as a spaceship or the first stages of an alien invasion. A high proportion of witnesses are simply baffled and want someone to explain whatever they saw

to them. Most want the authorities to tell them *anything* other than that they saw an alien flying saucer. Many of the witnesses are embarrassed and self-effacing. In fact, a number are actually unwilling to believe their own eyes and refuse to accept that what they have seen is an inexplicable UFO. The sad fact of UFO studies is that most serious and balanced people who study the subject will run a mile from accounts which open with *"I saw an alien spacecraft from another galaxy. Watch out, the aliens are coming."* On the contrary, the accounts which get their blood racing are those which begin with *"I don't know what I saw, but it did not appear to be anything normal like an aircraft or whatever. There must be a rational explanation, but I can't think of one."*

It's the latter sightings which tend to undermine the "myth theory"; the ones from sensible people seeing strange things that they don't understand. These people are perfectly aware of the subject, the hysteria which often surrounds it, and the films which are supposed to drive it, but they report what they see nevertheless. They know the storyline which takes us from light in the sky to evil alien invasion, and they reject it, but they still saw something, and they are puzzled – very often awed. These people are not *driven* by a myth; they are trying to *avoid* one. Even if 95 percent of those "sensible" sightings are ordinary objects and natural phenomena, we are still left with a myth-free 5 percent which needs looking into.

How researchers like Klass and Clarke believe that the myth is supposed to work is not completely clear but a look at Philip Klass' process and David Clarke's purported links between folklore, myth and sightings will give us the main points. On the surface it all sounds perfectly rational and even convincing. Look a little deeper, however, and their arguments start to fall apart.

According to Klass, it is a steady diet of UFO reports in the press which

drives people to see unidentified things in the sky. According to Clarke, the steady diet of films, books and TV shows over the past century – through some process not yet proven by its proponents – makes people see things that aren't there, or misinterpret things which are there. Then, when they have seen and reported these non-existent phenomena, others are prompted by the stories to see them too.

For well over thirty years Philip J Klass was a highly respected editor for the US aviation magazine *Aviation Week* (now *Aviation Week & Space Technology*). He was also well known for his efforts to debunk UFO claims. He once said that 97 to 98 percent of the people reporting UFOs are genuine people who are honestly mistaken. The rest, he said, are frauds. It was Klass, as discussed in Volume 1, who offered the then impressive cash prize of $10,000 to anyone who could meet his requirements with respect to UFOs. He'd pay the prize to anyone who could:

1. convince the American National Academy of Sciences that a part of, or a whole, crashed spacecraft was of extra-terrestrial origin, or

2. get the Academy to announce that other evidence proves that the Earth has been visited by extra-terrestrial spacecraft during the twentieth century, or

3. organise a bona fide extra-terrestrial visitor, born on a celestial body other than the Earth, to appear live before the General Assembly of the United Nations or on a national television program.

The challenge stood for the rest of Klass's life (through to 2005) without being successfully claimed. Leaving aside the connection with Klass, one has

to admit that – in over a century of claimed UFO sightings – none of those things has happened. Closely linked to the concept of UFOs being a mass myth, Klass came up with a proposed process of "mass delusion" which, he argued, worked in the following way:

The Klass Process of Mass Delusion

Newspapers announce a UFO sighting;

People are hopeful of seeing one and so go outside and identify all sorts of natural things as UFOs;

These new reports in the press add to the mass hysteria and the desire of others to see their own UFO;

UFO organisations add to the mix by encouraging reports;

Even more observers go out and "see" UFOs and report them to the media;

This process drives a self-powered spiral of hysteria;

But eventually, newspapers get tired of the reports, and the sightings slowly die away until – in some other region at a later time – it all starts again.

He was not trying to explain a myth, merely how a series of UFO sightings could be driven by peer-pressure. The neutral outsider has to admit

that the theory has strong elements of plausibility. People are certainly suggestible. Psychologists have shown how crowds can be manipulated to believe almost anything. Politicians down the ages have used such methods to manipulate and manage large numbers of people. But, if one wants to explain seventy years of UFO sightings one has to come up with the glue that holds it all together; and that, in modern terms, is the myth theory.

Dr David Clarke – a folklore specialist – is not the first to propose that UFOs are a myth, but his recent work has added another string to the theory's bow, albeit a carefully caveated one. His book *How UFOs Conquered the World: The History of a Modern Myth* purports to explain the myth and implies that the whole UFO subject lies solely in the minds of the witnesses[4]. However, he also protects his back. He begins his treatment by denying his central thesis. He warns his readers that he's not really looking at the UFO sightings themselves but is actually examining the people who see and believe in UFOs. In his early statements in the book he says:

> *Neither is my use of the word 'myth' meant to imply that any or all UFO phenomena, or related beliefs, are true or false. My subject matter is not UFOs per se but the people who see and believe in them.*

So, UFOs may or may not exist, but the power of myth certainly does. He's not arguing that UFOs are a myth (in spite of the title of the book), he's just saying that some (but he implies all) witnesses are simply victims of a myth. It's extremely convoluted and misleading to say the least. The use of the phrase "the UFO syndrome" throughout the book also subtly implies some sort of proven psychological problem with those who report UFOs. The book comes across very much as an almost disappointed review of Clarke's own journey through the world of UFOs – from once avid UFO researcher and

activist, through flirtations with explanations other than the extra-terrestrial hypothesis (ETH), to his current conviction that the whole thing is no more than the expression, through folklore, of socio-psychological conflicts; perhaps even the replacement of conventional religions with a new cult of inter-galactic travellers sent to save the Earth.

First, he sets up the media as the most likely villains behind the myth. On his website he has a graph which shows the number of sightings of UFOs reported to the British MoD each year since the mid-1970s. Against it he plots three major sci-fi films – *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *ET*, and *Independence Day*. The implication, from the visual concurrence of the three films on the timeline is that these films influenced the numbers of sightings reported to the MoD. Sure enough, the graph shows peaks either in the year the film was released or the year afterward. The problems, of course, are that Clarke is incredibly selective and that he steers well clear of any attempt to show how, exactly, sightings could be driven by films. It's enough for Dr Clarke to show his readers a film release and a peak in sightings.

David Clarke, of all people, knows full well that the MoD statistics on UFO sightings cannot be an accurate reflection of the true level of sightings in the UK. In addition, as a university teacher, he's well aware that any theory must be tested against all known evidence not merely a selected set of data. Later, I provide a list of most major sci-fi and horror films and TV shows for the past sixty years, together with an associated look at UFO statistics from both the UK and the United States. These show apparent some links between films and UFO sighting but also many instances when the link is not present or is negative. And the sightings in the US and UK are by no means the only ones that a thorough examination would take into account. What about the many UFO sightings over the decades in countries as far apart as Chile and France, Russia and Australia? Is David Clarke saying that all of those people have

been influenced by the myth even where they probably had no chance at all of reading western science fiction or seeing Steven Spielberg films?

Second, David Clarke discounts the five percent of inexplicable sightings by calling them a “tiny residue”.

> *As the majority of UFO sightings can be explained by this-worldly phenomena there is no valid justification for invoking aliens to explain the tiny residue that remains unexplained.*

There’s no valid justification for invoking aliens to explain *any* UFO sighting, and no serious student of the subject would do more than present the extra-terrestrial possibility as just that, one of many possibilities. The “residue” may be tiny to David Clarke but the 5 percent equates to more than just a handful of reports (not that one should discount even a few). In fact, it equals between three and six *thousand* inexplicable sightings *every year* across the world – up to 114,000 completely unexplainable sights of aerial anomalies in the twenty-first century.

Thirdly, Clarke uses scientific argument – based on the considered beliefs of a host of big names – to question whether sentient life has arisen on other planets elsewhere. Using the arguments of some of the world’s most eminent scientists he shows that they believe – *on the basis of current knowledge and understanding* – that it is unlikely that civilisations have developed elsewhere in the universe, and that, even if they have, they would be highly unlikely to consider the Earth worth a second glance.

Dr Clarke uses the views of these eminent scientists with total confidence that they are right. But they are probably not even correct from the point of view of our *current* understanding of physics and the universe. With the greatest of respect to the scientific community their track record on such

matters is just about as weak as it could be. I would humbly point out that there were scores of extremely eminent scientists who argued against Albert Einstein's theories, saying that he simply could not be correct. But he was.

There are two elements to the "could there be advanced life out there" problem. Firstly, please review my calculations in the Introduction to this book. In the unutterable vastness of the known universe there are almost certainly scores, hundreds, or even thousands of *advanced* civilisations which could be thousands or millions of years ahead of us in developmental terms. Statistically – logically – it is inconceivable that there are no advanced civilisations out there.

But, why should these civilisations in all the hugeness of the universe even notice the Earth, never mind bother to visit it? I would turn that argument on its head: Given that some of these advanced civilisations must be tens of thousands, or millions, of years ahead of us and that they and their drones and robots have had all that time to explore the universe, it's inconceivable that they *haven't* discovered the Earth and wanted to know more about it and its strange inhabitants. We humans have been able to explore space for a mere seventy years and we've already developed our technology to the point that we'll be able to set up permanent bases on Mars in a few years. We've gained a huge amount of data about our solar system and discovered around 5,000 planets orbiting distant stars. If we survive as a species, what might we know and be able to do in even as short a time as a thousand years?

David Clarke also brings up the "why so many" question. This is a strong argument that I will discuss later in this book. Why are there so many UFOs and why do they insist on being so visible? Clarke argues in the concluding chapters of his book that there is every logical reason to believe that humans are the only sentient life in our galaxy and that, if sentient life has arisen in other galaxies, it is unlikely to have found us. Both conclusions *may* prove

correct, but I doubt it. He's coming at it from only one possible interpretation. There are equally logical reasons to believe that sentient life most certainly has arisen elsewhere, and every logical reason to believe that those life-forms *must* have found us given how long they've been around. Quite apart from the purely technological considerations I believe that we should also take into account the possibility that some very advanced civilisations may have a higher understanding of what the universe actually is and how it links with what we call "consciousness". It is even conceivable that one of those civilisations put humanity on this planet in the first place.

Clarke believes that the UFO myth is a combination of the human race's irrational love of the supernatural and the very human need for wish-fulfilment. He repeats the oft-posed (and somewhat convenient) idea that the UFO business tells us far more about ourselves than it does about extra-terrestrials. A good sound-bite, but he fails to show how that is the case. His use of high quality scientific names to support his conclusions may impress him and some of his readers, but just because things seem "unlikely" does not mean that they are impossible, and just because a scientist says that something is impossible according to current scientific knowledge does not mean that scientific knowledge in the future will not allow us to see it as perfectly feasible. If you had told a physicist, fifty years ago that a beam of light in a vacuum could be stopped in its tracks, they'd have laughed you out of the room. But we now know that it can. To be brutally blunt I would also argue that the fact that a number of eminent scientists say that something is impossible is an excellent reason to conclude that it is almost certainly possible. Scientists as a species have a truly awful track record when assessing the future!

Dr Clarke also claims that hitherto "solid" UFO cases have been debunked in recent years and he bemoans the fact that nothing has been proved after all

these decades (as though there's a cosmic limit on the time it must take between theory and proof). He writes off the famous Exeter sighting (mentioned earlier) simply on the basis of a very flimsy set of sceptical arguments (see Volume 1) and effectively surrenders the field to those who argue that every single UFO case is explicable in conventional terms if only we have enough evidence.

Clarke's frustration at there being no apparent progress in UFO studies is understandable, but all of us have to accept that, if there is anything to UFOs at all (and I believe there is), the phenomenon is probably so far ahead of our science and philosophy that we are highly unlikely to unravel the issue within less than a good few lifetimes.

But the core of the myth – for both Klass and Clarke – lies in the media and particularly in film. If a myth has grown so powerful in modern times that it has come to dominate our entire species and cause us to see things that aren't there, I think it needs some serious study – and certainly more than I can do in a single chapter. However, the juxtaposition of cinema films and UFOs could do with a little more consideration.

Chapter 4

Film and Culture

If there are UFOs and they want to make themselves known, land! And if they don’t want to make their visits known, turn off the lights!

Philip J Klass

There's little doubt that the publicity afforded to UFO sightings since World War Two has boosted people's awareness of the phenomenon and perhaps their proclivity for seeing things and using online reporting systems. Film and TV have introduced hundreds of millions of people to the overall concept, and there’s no doubt the numbers of reported sightings have increased significantly.

The issue for the outsider is, however, whether films and TV are stoking up mass hysteria about UFOs or whether UFO reports are acting as a source of strange and exciting things which TV and film producers are pouncing upon with glee. Do the media lead society's beliefs or follow them? David Clarke would argue that society follows the lead set by TV and films, but it’s possible to find a good deal of evidence to the contrary, not to mention some solid evidence that some films were prompted by UFO stories. In the real world, things are never clear cut. While many UFO sightings may have been prompted by a recent film or TV series, there are too many which are not. In his recent book, Robbie Graham says that Jacques Vallée, the famous French

UFO enthusiast, tried to persuade Steven Spielberg that there was far more to the UFO phenomenon than just the extra-terrestrial hypothesis. Graham said:

> *Spielberg wasn't convinced, however, telling Vallée; 'You're probably right, but that's not what the public is expecting; this is Hollywood and I want to give people something that's close to what they expect*[5].

The UK and the US share a common language - well, mostly - and our cultures have been very closely linked for centuries. So, one would expect the two populations to react in similar ways to films and TV series – particularly if the Myth Theory is true. If one compares the official UK reports made to the Ministry of Defence with the American reports to NUFORC, however, a strange disconnect becomes apparent. From a peak in sightings in 1978, MoD reports began to follow a very definite downward trend. That was not the case for other British UFO databases but David Clarke sticks to the MoD reports and so shall we for the time being.

The American figures, on the other hand, have been on a generally upward curve almost consistently (with the exception of the past few years when there has been a decline in sightings). The only other peak year in MoD reports was in 1996 when, weirdly, NUFORC in the United States experienced a distinct drop in sightings. That year was when *Independence Day* and several other sci-fi movies were released. In the UK their release was accompanied by an upturn in sightings. In the USA the same film releases, in the same year, seem to have had a negative impact – a distinct downturn.

It's not as if there was much difference in the dates on which *Independence Day* was released in the two countries. It was launched in theatres in the United States on June 25, 1996 and in the UK about ten days later - on July 4,

1996 (US Independence Day!).

There was an earlier spike in American UFO sightings, in 1995, but that surge coincided with no major film releases and with a reduction in sighting reports in the UK. The year 1997 was an important year for sci-fi film releases, seeing *Alien*: *Resurrection*; *Contact*; *Event Horizon*; *Men in Black*; and *The Fifth Element* premiered during the twelve-month. Yet British UFO reports (to the Ministry of Defence) went down that year and kept going down (the MoD desk was not closed until 2009).

The figures in this chapter show that there has been a rising trend of both US and UK overall UFO sightings and that there has been a steadily rising number of sci-fi films and TV programmes aired. But there is simply no obvious or consistent relationship between films and TV and sightings. Our lengthy diet of sci-fi films and TV programmes may well have primed people for sightings, but it is clearly not a simple relationship nor the direct one implied by Dr Clarke. And no one has yet shown how such visual stimuli are able to promote a myth which, in its reports, is so totally different from almost everything portrayed on the big or small screens.

The world shares powerful myths about other things. Allied with these myths are countless films and TV series featuring such things as werewolves, demons, vampires, witches, ogres, and many more such fiends. One could argue that legends of the devil and vampire variety are more prevalent, and represent more gut-wrenching human fears than do UFOs, so where are the mass sighting reports and photos of werewolves and vampires? Where are the scores of websites packed with lists of hundreds of sightings of vampires, ghouls, werewolves, demonic creatures and witches?

If one looks at the numbers of science fiction and sci-fi-horror movies released by decade you would not be surprised to see a definite increase since the 1920s. In that long-ago decade the world produced some twenty-three

such films of which the Americans and the British together produced around 40 percent. The genre was 60 percent rest-of-the-world. By the 1940s the Americans alone were producing almost 90 percent of the sci-fi and horror movies. The peak decade for American dominance of sci-fi production was the 1950s, when they released 155 of the 188 films premiered during that ten-year span. If you add the British, then between them, they launched 170 of 188 (90 percent) of the decade's sci-fi films. In the 2000s the number of such releases had grown to 390 and the United States was responsible for around 75 percent of them (and about 60 percent of the sci-fi films launched so far in the 2010s). So, the production of sci-fi films has increased and so has the number of sightings of UFOs. Case proven!

Not so fast! Are films based on real-life sightings and concepts, or are the sightings the result of seeing too many sci-fi films? It's a real stumper of the chicken and egg variety. But, unlike that biological conundrum, the answer to the film v UFO one is likely to be a bit of everything. The media have an impact, sure, but is it sufficiently powerful to cause such a consistent and pervasive phenomenon?

There are actually *three* critical conundrums:

do people follow films and TV and books and then report unidentified objects, or do the sightings of weird things drive the producers and directors to make sci-fi films and programmes?

if UFO sightings are the result of people blindly following a myth, why do those sightings not follow the objects and characteristics portrayed in films more closely? and,

why does the UFO Myth have such a pronounced alleged effect, while

other myths do not seem to result in colourful, global sightings on a similar scale?

Most UFO sightings run totally counter to the images presented by TV and film (with the exception of films like *ET* and *Close Encounters* which were deliberately based on existing UFO reports). People see lights, triangles, discs and cigar-shaped objects, but not star fighters and death-stars. Or would the sceptics propose that only *certain* myths – such as the UFO one – cause the hysterical chain reactions of sightings and drive individuals to fake photos and videos and to lie about radar returns and electronic effects? And we have to remember that airline and military pilots also see these things. In which case I think it is incumbent on David Clarke, and anyone else who supports the Myth Theory, to prove to us how that particular psycho-sociological effect works.

Table 1 gives the full figures for sci-fi/horror films by producing nation over the past one hundred years (barring the last three years of the present decade). It illustrates the tenfold increase in such films and the recent American dominance of the genre – peaking in the 1940s and 50s but still hitting almost three-quarters in the 1990s. These figures would seem to support the sceptics' case – that sci-fi has driven the UFO craze – increasing numbers of sci-fi films and increasing numbers of UFOs being seen by gullible humans. But, again, it all depends on which stats you use and which assumptions you make.

A more detailed look at films and sightings is presented in Table 2. This lists sighting numbers in the UK and the US alongside sci-fi film releases. As you can see, the impact of one on the other is not at all clear. For example, the TV series *Star Trek* was launched in the US in 1966 yet UFO sightings went down the following year. In 1968 there were three important space-

fiction films including the all-time great *2001- A Space Odyssey*. US UFO sightings dropped for the next four years and British ones for the next two years.

The 1977 release of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* is aligned with a large increase in British sightings the following year and a smaller increase in US UFO reports. But after that small increase, US sightings went down in number for the next few years in spite of some very good sci-fi films being released. It was the opposite way around when *Independence Day* was launched in 1996 – a large increase in US sightings in 1997 but a drop in the UK. For the next decade US sightings boomed alongside sci-fi film releases but those in the UK either dropped or stagnated in spite of the British seeing exactly the same films at the same time. Check it all out – the relationship between film and UFO sightings is nowhere near as certain as David Clarke implies.

Film and TV (as well as other media) have always had a major impact on our prevailing culture. Newspapers, books, TV and film influence our individual world-views. For example, the media can prompt you to regard guns in a very different way to the way your grandparents saw them, they can set a whole fashion trend soaring into general acceptance, they can "create" a standard acceptance of "caring and sharing" while subtly glorifying violence, and they can move words from narrow use by a few people in specific parts of the world to global linguistic powerhouses.

It may also be the case – although not proven – that the media can gradually turn a set of unproven sightings and events into the firm belief frameworks of millions. Today, around 60 percent of Americans and 50 percent of Europeans "believe" in the Extra-Terrestrial Hypothesis (ETH). So, superficially, it looks like a done deal. Over the past century films, books and TV shows have brainwashed most of the world's population into

believing in, and seeing, things in the sky, and then claiming they are extra-terrestrial space ships.

Table 1: **One Hundred Years of Sci-Fi and Sci-Horror Films**

Decade	Total No.	USA	UK	Ger-many	France	Italy	Russia	Japan	Other	Non-US	% Non-US
1920s	23.0	9.0	1.0	7.0	2.0	1.0	2.0		1.0	14.0	60.9
1930s	45.0	28.0	5.0	7.0	2.0	0.0	2.0		1.0	17.0	37.8
1940s	42.0	37.0	2.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	1.0		1.0	5.0	11.9
1950s	188.0	155.0	15.0	2.0	0.5	1.5	4.0	9.0	1.0	33.0	17.6
1960s	168.0	81.5	25.0	2.0	4.5	7.0	3.0	28.0	17.0	86.5	51.5
1970s	193.0	90.5	22.0	2.0	6.5	6.5	6.0	20.0	39.5	102.5	53.1
1980s	292.0	182.5	9.5	5.0	8.0	13.0	5.5	40.5	28.0	109.5	37.5
1990s	240.0	178.0	5.5	2.0	5.0	1.5	0.5	31.0	16.5	62.0	25.8
2000s	390.0	277.5	13.0	3.5	7.0	0.5	5.0	42.5	41.0	112.5	28.8
2010s (*)	259.0	159.5	22.5	6.0	6.0	1.0	5.0	25.0	34.0	99.5	38.4

Sources: The Guardian; Wikipedia, IMDB.com (*) to mid-2017 only

Table 2: Films and Sightings

Year	British Sightings (MoD)	US Sightings (NUFORC)	Major TV and film sci-fi
1959	22	64	
1960	31	79	
1961	71	59	Britain: A for Andromeda (TV)
1962	46	83	Day of the Triffids
1963	51	95	The Day that Mars Invaded Earth
1964	74	130	
1965	56	220	Dr Who and the Daleks; Thunderbirds launched
1966	95	241	Star Trek TV series
1967	362	239	
1968	280	268	2001: A Space Odyssey; Planet of the Apes; Barbarella
1969	228	189	
1970	181	184	
1971	379	143	
1972	201	209	
1973	233	272	
1974	177	321	
1975	208	377	

1976	200	339	The Man Who Fell to Earth
1977	435	322	Close Encounters of the Third Kind; Prey; Star Wars
1978	750	397	Invasion of the Body Snatchers
1979	550	302	Alien (Ridley Scott); Star Trek (film)
1980	350	295	Star Wars: Empire Strikes Back; Flash Gordon; Hangar 18
1981	600	209	
1982	250	221	The Thing; ET; Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan
1983	390	194	Return of the Jedi
1984	214	215	Star Trek III: The Search for Spock; The Tripods (TV)
1985	177	255	Cocoon
1986	120	230	Critters; Aliens; Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home
1987	150	275	Star Trek: The Next Generation
1988	397	285	Alien Nation; My Stepmother Is an Alien
1989	258	300	Communion; The Abyss; Star Trek V: The Final Frontier
1990	209	309	I Come in Peace; Martians Go Home
1991	117	278	Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country
1992	147	305	Alien 3
1993	258	383	The X-Files begins; Coneheads
1994	209	497	Stargate; Star Trek: Generations

1995	117	1469	
1996	609	1008	Independence Day; Mars Attacks!; Star Trek
1997	425	1439	Alien; Contact; Event Horizon; MiB; The Fifth Element
1998	193	2015	Star Trek: Insurrection; Invasion: Earth (TV); The X Files
1999	228	3152	Galaxy Quest; My Favorite Martian; Star Wars: Ep I
2000	210	3085	Battlefield Earth; Red Planet
2001	203	3523	
2002	100	3678	MiB II; Firefly; X Files ends; Star Trek; Star Wars: Ep II
2003	99	4412	Battlestar Galactica is reimagined, to critical acclaim
2004	91	4732	
2005	158	4509	Dr Who; Alien Abduction; Star Wars III; War of Worlds
2006	97	4154	Torchwood (TV)
2007	135	4723	
2008	285	5279	Cloverfield; Star Wars; X-Files: I Want to Believe
2009		4971	Star Trek
2010		4755	
2011		5598	Battle: Los Angeles
2012		8075	Men in Black 3
2013		7775	Gravity; World War Z; Star Trek: Into Darkness
2014		8636	Interstellar

2015		6853	The Martian; Star Wars: The Force Awakens
2016	257	5581	The 5th Wave; Independence Day: Resurgence; Star Trek Beyond
2017		2533	Alien: Covenant; Star Wars: The Last Jedi

Sources: Guardian Datablog (undated); UK MoD, NUFORC database; BEAMS (UK) – selected sightings only.

But, as we've seen above, we must deal with the powerful counter-argument. If that process is so potent, why haven't the thousands of books, films and TV shows on vampires and werewolves had a similar effect? And why haven't the terrifying aliens portrayed in sci-fi movies been reported by abductees and the general public? As Robbie Graham said in his book when speaking about the gruesome aliens depicted in films:

> *… the freakish creatures that inhabited the movie would rarely venture out [into UFO reports and sightings]*

If film represents culture, the question is whether it stands in advance of cultural beliefs and therefore seeks to influence people's lives and worldview, or whether, as a medium, it discusses and airs cultural themes once they have been recognised. Clearly film has been used at times to sway people's views – in other words, for propaganda reasons. Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* and countless equivalent British and US war films are great examples. But are commercial sci-fi films propaganda or are they merely following society's lead, giving people what they want (as Steven Spielberg told Jacques Vallée)?

To a large extent films – like written literature – explore possible outcomes and futures, and paint a picture of scientific, technological, and social advances and their implications. But, on the whole they reflect, and reflect upon, what happens in real life, what humans do and think, what humans feel. To a significant extent one can argue that the sci-fi genre of books, films and TV series is often merely a fashionable container for standard morality tales. Whether the wrapper is a horror story, a murder mystery, a science fiction blockbuster, a war thriller, or a western, the threads are almost always

identical – humans fighting, helping each other, overcoming obstacles and trials, taking revenge, gaining justice, falling in love, giving in to jealousy and hate, showing courage and self-sacrifice, and so on. Take any film, TV or written fiction genre and you will find the same underlying morality plays whatever the genre. Look below the surface of special effects in modern films and they deal with exactly the same human strengths and frailties, and in very much the same ways, as William Shakespeare's plays. Jealousy, murder, love, and war were just as vividly portrayed in the sixteenth century on the stage of the Globe Theatre, with painted scenery backdrops, as they are in the multi-million dollar, CGI-enabled, modern blockbusters.

The indications are that, far from being the driver for UFO "beliefs" and a predisposition to see them, film and the other media have followed news reports and other documented sightings, and used them to sell copy and to underpin tales of the usual stories of human strengths and weaknesses in modern morality plays – good conquers evil, love overcomes hate, revenge is often pointless and self-defeating, courage is its own reward, self-sacrifice is laudatory, and so on. The morality of modern sci-fi films is no different to that portrayed in other genres. In fact, it is no different to the morality of Chaucer and Shakespeare – it is simply that the stage is far more colourful and engrossing for modern audiences. The messages, however, are exactly the same. Film-makers wish to make money, and to that end they give the public exactly what Chaucer and Shakespeare did – adventure, excitement, action, love, comedy, murder, jealousy, hatred, fighting, a smidgeon of lewdness to titillate, even a little exo-hatred and patriotism.

Looked at carefully we can see that many films use aliens and space threats not so much to explore the concept of life beyond the Earth as to freshen up the place left in modern drama by the Frankinstein monsters, the Golems, and the Godzillas of the past. The Japanese still love their Godzilla films, the

Americans and the Europeans love the *Alien* series, and we have all adopted a pessimistic attitude to the development (or not) of life on Earth. Armageddon and biological doom are standard themes. The aliens and invasions simply help to portray how humans might try to deal with such appalling futures. And what is *Independence Day* if not a modern "Cowboys and Indians" film (apologies to Native Americans but this was how they were sold in the 50s and 60s)?

A few films have deliberately taken existing UFO stories as their subject – particularly *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* – and to that extent they may also encourage people to see UFOs. But *ET* did not result in a massive upsurge of sightings of little green or grey men, and many films on the subject have thrown a dollop of humour at it – *My Favourite Martian, Mars Attacks* and *Cone Heads* come to mind.

There may well be a temporary upsurge in UFO sightings following a particularly important space blockbuster, but a strong contributory factor could also be that, when they emerge from the theatre and in the days and nights that follow, people are more likely to be looking up at the sky, so less likely to miss anything that might be there.

Sceptics might argue that, while the link between *specific* films/TV shows and UFO sightings is not proven, the effect of the totality of the media on the overall attitude of society towards these things might be a lot stronger. A steady diet of spaceships and aliens on the big-screen and an equally steady dose of alien invasion on the small screen might have warmed-up the human race to seeing things in the sky. It's a good point – extremely difficult to prove or disprove. But there are interesting considerations which tend towards the conclusion that this relationship, too, may not exist. The first is that film aliens and their spaceships are almost entirely hostile, while UFOs are almost never reported as taking hostile action. The most hostile action

reported by abductees of alleged aliens is that they remove sperm and eggs. There is reason to believe that UFOs are linked to the killing and dissection of animals but that would not affect a human perspective. Such events have a terrible effect on the people and animals who experience them but, whatever world one lives in, they can never be described as hostile in the way some films portray aliens. The film *ET* gave us a pleasant little alien who just wanted to go home, and there are a few comedy alien films, but the aliens in most films are far from pleasant. Ridley Scott's *Alien* series was the stuff of several years of colourful nightmares. By contrast, the aliens which get reported by "experiencers" are consistently distant, calm and emotionally-divorced creatures who seem to want to study us and remove bodily fluids. They may not want to cosy-up and be best friends for life, not exactly cuddly, but to-date they have not exhibited any particular need to rip out our entrails, lay their eggs in our stomachs, or tear the heads off our soldiers.

The second consideration is that the shapes of UFOs are never the same as the films and TV shows would have us expect. I've mentioned the shapes before (discs instead of battle-wagons, and so on - see Volume 1's comparison of types of fictional spaceship versus the things people report).

A third consideration is that people report strange characteristics that are never, ever, part of the film and TV versions of spaceships – "wobbling" UFOs, right angle turns, sudden halts in mid-air, hovering in silence, appearing and disappearing instantaneously, silent movement, strangely flashing lights, very weird colours, and so on.

The cultural myth of film and TV spaceships and aliens is completely different, in too many ways, to the reported look and feel of UFOs and their crews. To take just two decades: in the 1950s, books and films portrayed spaceships as needle-nosed or rocket shaped. But people saw discs, cylinders, and delta objects (and there were very few delta-winged aircraft in those

days). In the 2000s the media's view of space ships had evolved to vast rumbling, girder-filled freighters, sleek warships with guns sticking out on all sides, or dark, evil-looking constructions with claw-like appendages. Yet people continue to report discs, lighted globes, wedge-shaped objects, cylinders, and cigars. If the myth is so powerful, the simple question the myth-theorists have to answer is: Why do people not see the things that the myth-makers feed them?

In his excellent 2015 book, Robbie Graham, carefully plots the degree of alignment between films and TV on the one hand and the UFO phenomenon on the other. What stands out to me are two things:

there does not appear to be any sort of recognisable alignment between films and TV and the UFOs that people report, and,

the use of sci-fi to carry common themes such as horror, comedy, and drama is the most persuasive theory for how the system actually works.

In one chapter, Graham discusses the film *Fire in the Sky*, which portrayed (inaccurately) the famous Travis Walton abduction (see further discussion later in this book). Graham demonstrates how that film influenced a string of similarly horrific films such as *Altered, The Fourth Kind, Dark Skies, Alien Abduction and Extra-terrestrial*. The central character – Walton – influenced the film, not the other way around and the film then prompted other similar offerings.

As Graham clearly shows, and my research supports, the link between film and UFOs is not strong. In fact, it does not exist in any one-way sense; i.e. that film and TV, etc. influence UFO sightings and related incidents in a simple causal process. The evidence is very confused, and most definitely not

one-way. The extremely active imaginations of script writers and film designers have produced some iconic aliens – from the Martians in *Invaders from Mars* in 1953, to *ET* and the various types of terrifying creatures in *Alien*, and on to the immense variety of imaginative creatures in the Star Wars and Star Trek films. A brief look at TV sci-fi also demonstrates a massive variation in the way aliens and spaceships have been portrayed. *The Andromeda Strain* cast aliens as a dastardly horde of invaders, *Star Trek* has shown them as both good and bad, a variety of humanoid and non-humanoid beings with the full range of very human strengths and weaknesses. *My Favourite Martian* put a very human Martian into a comedy setting, the iconic *Dr Who* has presented us with a veritable zoo of highly imaginative creatures – both biological and robotic, and *Close Encounters*, *The X-Files*, *Roswell*, and *UFO* have brought back the oft-forgotten link with what abductees actually say they have seen. But the most persuasive trend appears to be that TV programmes and films are *following* the broad drift of what people have already seen and reported, while embellishing and altering it to make it more exciting, more terrifying … more suitable for human entertainment.

Where does all this leave us? First, we can be certain that the steady flow of hundreds of monster and vampire films has not led to thousands of sightings and photographs of werewolves and vampires every year (even mistaken photos of other things which the witnesses *thought* were horrific creatures). Second, we know that the propaganda of thousands of romantic movies and rom-coms since the 1950s have not caused couples to live "happily ever after". In spite of a continuous and heavy diet of love and romance, there seems to have been no increase in the percentage of the adult population which believes that romance necessarily lasts forever. Instead the divorce and break-up rate has increased and stayed stubbornly high no matter

how many times we watch couples falling deeply in love and staying that way, to a soundtrack of gooey music.

So why should we conclude that a few hundred sci-fi films would cause the population of the whole world (remember it is not only Yanks and Limeys who see these things) to report things in the sky and fake photos and videos of such things?

In a way, the Myth Theory could be seen as quite insulting. It assumes that humans, en-masse, are so gullible that they will believe anything the cinema and TV producers show them. I can accept that some people will be so affected, I can even accept that some would be prompted to produce fake photos and videos for a lark. But we are talking about between 60,000 and 120,000 sightings every year across the globe, of which possibly 3,000 to 6,000 are totally inexplicable. A good many of these reported by people not particularly given to hysteria and exaggeration – military pilots, airline pilots, police officers, air traffic controller, professional people, and so on.

If I were a film or TV producer and I accepted the immense power of Myth, I would be actively promoting my own myth. It would be that people get super-wealthy and live incredibly long lives if they send at least fifty-dollars every year to a certain magic bank account; which, surprisingly, would turn out to be mine. In my films ordinary people would be struggling to make ends meet, or they would be under the cosh from local bad guys, or their relationships would be on the verge of breakup, or they would have been trying to find “the right person” for years. Their lives would be turned around when they suddenly find a magic card with a bank account number on it and the instruction to send $50 every year to it. The card would tell them that all their troubles will be over for as long as the annual payments continue.

In my films people would then win the lottery, the bad guys would

mysteriously get incarcerated or die, happiness would reign in their relationships, and they would suddenly walk straight into that “special person” with whom they will spend the rest of their happy lives. The closing scene of every film would have the protagonists gazing fondly at my card and saying to each other: “Thank goodness for the wonderful person who did this for us. $50 a year is a small price to pay for our incredible luck/happiness.”

The myth might take a few films to take hold, but once it did, and millions of people started sending me their money, I’d soon be buying my Caribbean island.

Part 2

Normality

In spite of the fact that I conducted the most thorough investigation that was humanly possible, the vehicle or stimulus that scared Zamora to the point of panic has never been found. [6]

> Major Hector Quintanilla (ex-Head of Project Blue Book) about the Lonnie Zamora encounter in 1964.

The many rumors regarding the flying disc became a reality yesterday when the intelligence office of the 509th Bomb group of the Eighth Air Force, Roswell Army Air Field, was fortunate enough to gain possession of a disc …

> Extract from the Roswell Press Release, 1947 (USAAF)

Chapter 5

From our Mole – 2

“Citizens of Arcturus, host members of Ganymede Six, and Hive 675 of Aldebaran please be aware that we have now entered the atmosphere of what the locals call Earth.

As you will see, the atmosphere is mainly nitrogen/oxygen/carbon dioxide which is breathable by some of our guests today. Others will find the water coverage more attractive and amenable to their biology.

The ship is now carrying out a slow and low passage over a densely inhabited area and you will sense and see the planet’s dominant land lifeform. As we pass across this small area of dwellings, we can all feel the wonderment and fear emanating from these creatures.

One of the Ganymede hosts has asked an interesting question. Yes, the creatures are extremely numerous. They are related to the larger primates – they call them apes – but are only slightly more developed. However, unlike many of their ape ancestors, they are extremely aggressive. This may be partly due to overcrowding but we have much evidence from the past that “humans” as they call themselves have been reliant on their innate aggression for their success against most other land-based lifeforms and against each other.

And, again, the answer is affirmative. With around seven billion creatures already living on the land our bio-computers calculate that the probability of mass extinction is nudging the 90 percent mark.

An Arturan guest asks about their technological development as against their intellectual and ethical progress as a species. The monkey-creatures are ingenious and clever. They have developed basic forms of technology from

solid state electronics to vehicles which use air pressure differentials to "fly" through the atmosphere. Crude but reasonably effective.

However, they are also polluting their own planet day by day and the carbon and methane content of the gossamer-thin layer of atmosphere is increasing at an almost run-away rate. The bio-puters have included this factor in the calculation of mass-extinction within less than one hundred years.

But that is the least important part of our trip here. As you will sense, we have now entered the water and are cruising at about seven hundred miles per hour at a depth of around two thousand feet. The water covers two-thirds of this beautiful planet and it is this medium and its dominant lifeform we are all anxious to see and talk with.

The dolphins will have much to tell us about the monkey-creatures who think they rule the planet. But, above all, they will discuss with us what might be possible once those apes have finally destroyed their own species. Inter-galactic rules prevent us from interfering – even for good – and, as it now seems almost certain that the humans will bring down an early curtain on their species, we will all want to hear how the dolphins and their cousins of this water-world see the future.

Those of you who are historians and philosophers will gain much from conversing with these highly intelligent creatures. They may be close relations of the Hives of Aldebaran and – as such – we are anticipating a fascinating and extremely positive time here on Earth.

And yes, we will be asking about their efforts to improve the land-based life forms and their fear – which we discussed on our last visit – that it is simply too late to save the ape-creatures."

Chapter 6

Little & Large

… this huge, dark object as big as a barn … with red flashing lights on it

Officer Eugene Bertrand, 1965 Exeter, NH

For as far back as we can trace the UFO story, the most pervasive theory – held consciously or subconsciously by the majority of us – is that a significant proportion of UFOs are physical objects made of some sort of advanced material and carrying crew and sometimes passengers. The assumption is that they have come from somewhere else – another star system, another galaxy, a different dimension, even a different time – but the key assumption remains that they are as real as a Boeing 747 or a brick wall.

But is this true? Can objects be real that do what these things do? Can anything which can appear and disappear at will, be considered "real"? Can things which defy the laws of gravity and inertia exist in the same universe as ourselves? Is it possible that something which carries so many contradictions in a single entity, can be part of what we think of as reality?

The first question we must ask ourselves, therefore, is: What proof do we have that these things are real in a physical sense? Setting aside the accounts from abductees about being taken on board strange craft by even stranger beings, do we have any strong indications that unidentified aerial phenomena might be solid physical objects?

The answer is, amazingly, yes. Notwithstanding what we will be talking

about in later chapters there is good reason to accept the physicality of some unidentified objects. For example, in 1980, Sergeant Jim Penniston took his three-man patrol out into Rendlesham Forest in Norfolk expecting to find a crashed aircraft. What they actually stumbled across was the strangest object they would ever see. In a clearing they found a brightly lit triangular object sitting on the forest floor. It sat there quietly as Penniston approached. He had time to record markings on the side and even to place his hand on it. He said it felt warm and metallic to the touch. Other people have also touched such objects, and some have suffered for it. In 1967 Stefan Michalak approached such an object at Falcon Lake in Canada. He looked inside and was somehow irradiated by his interactions with the thing. In 1988 Mrs Faye Knowles claimed to have touched a cold, “spongy” object which locked onto the roof of her car in Australia. And there were several people associated with the Roswell incidents who claimed to have touched bits of supposedly crashed objects. Other witnesses have testified to marks on the ground where these things have landed. Indentations were found at Rendlesham Forest. French Gendarmes found such marks in the soil after the Valensole incident in 1965. At Trans-en-Provence in 1981 an object left long-lasting marks in a lavender field. There have been scores of alleged landings and crashes from Russia to South America and the UK to Canade. And a bevy of credible people have claimed to have been examined, prodded and generally interfered-with by creatures who have abducted them.

Physicality may also be inferred by the fact that the objects reflect visible light; that is, they can be seen. Thousands of people see them every year, but these things are also captured on video and still cameras. The human brain and eyes can be fooled by lots of things and can even be persuaded to see things that aren’t actually there, but cameras are much less susceptible to illusion or delusion. If a photograph can be taken, then something must be

reflecting light into the lens. It doesn't mean that every photograph or video of an alleged UFO is a "real" UFO, but it does mean that, when we have discounted the double-exposure, trick photographs, insects on windows, photoshopping, etc., the camera has provided us with some serious food for thought.

However, if the testimony of mere humans and cameras doesn't carry any weight for you, what about the evidence from radar and other sensors? Over the years, UFOs have been recorded on military and civilian radar sets and this lends strong credence to the possibility that they are solid objects or can act as solid objects. The earliest British radars during and immediately after World War Two picked up anomalous objects over the North Sea. The civil radars at Washington National Airport picked up returns from unidentified flying objects in 1952. These were not fleeting returns, they carried on for hours and the controllers watched as the UFOs disappeared once US fighters tried to intercept them and came back again after the fighters had left the scene (implying something akin to Dr John Alexander's "pre-cognition" theory). The objects were seen by people on the ground, by USAF pilots, by airline pilots, and by radar controllers who went outside to see what they could see.

Radars picked up one or more UFOs over RAF Lakenheath in 1956, and there have been radar sightings in almost every year since then. But the most incredible of such sensor sightings occurred in 2004 when the US Navy encountered at least one UFO off San Diego. A US Carrier Group including an air-defence cruiser – the USS Princeton – had an encounter with an object that is now known as "Tic Tac". We'll look at this incident in detail later, but people on the Princeton reported sensor data from the object and were able to vector F-18s onto its location. The "Tic-Tac" episode was not just a single sighting, however. It covered days of sensor recordings by ships

and aircraft of anomalous objects around the carrier group.

So, people have touched a few of the objects, people have seen them, cameras have recorded them, there is a small amount of physical evidence of their visits, and sophisticated sensors have captured them. This evidence has been gathered from just about every continent and over an eighty-year time span. That the UFO anomaly exists is now incontestable and it seems pretty certain that they are real, solid objects. Or, at least, that *some* of them are.

This appears to be a rational and reliable conclusion but the improbabilities inherent in the UFO phenomenon tend to undermine it. Why would advanced civilisations need such craft? On planet Earth we are only a few years away from fully autonomous drones. Why send large, apparently crewed objects to do jobs which robots could easily do?

The sheer number of inexplicable UFOs is incredible. As mentioned earlier, I have estimated (conservatively) some 3,000 to 6,000 a year across the world (but far more sightings, of course, most of which will be explicable in terms of quite ordinary phenomena). If we take a mid-point and plump for 4,500 each year there have been no less than 360,000 UFOs which cannot be explained by conventional science in the past eighty years – and over 85,000 since the turn of the current century. What is so interesting about this planet?

And size is another fascinating issue. People have reported objects from just a few inches across to a mile wide. One can appreciate that drones or automated machines would be small, one can suspect that objects a few feet across might contain very small beings, but how many beings – even if large – can a mile-wide object hold? Why is such a beast necessary? It would be able to carry thousands of people of human size and probably hundreds of taller creatures. Such objects are hard to accept but they have been reported on numerous occasions by extremely credible witnesses, including airline pilots.

UFOs can be spherical, disc-shaped, triangular, cigar-shaped, rods, pear-shaped, and even pyramidal, but no-one has ever – even in the 1950s – reported a needle-nosed space fighter, a multifaceted space freighter, or a huge death-star. The shapes and sizes have remained virtually identical over at least an eighty-year period regardless of the changing face of science-fiction spaceships.

The different shapes might be put down to fashion or perhaps function (which we have no way of understanding) but the size issue is one of the more fascinating physical conundrums. Why do UFOs have to be so small or so large (and everything in-between)?

Large UFOs

Huge objects with lights were seen and reported by British and American bomber crews in the 1940s, hundreds of witnesses came forward to report gigantic UFOs during the Hudson Valley wave in the 1980s, and Ray Bowyer, the pilot for Aurigny Airlines, told of a mile-wide yellow UFO over Guernsey in the 2000s. These things are quite literally unbelievable and that fact, alone, gives the people who report them a great deal of credibility. Who would make up an object a mile-or-more wide and expect anyone to believe them?

America West, 1995

In May of 1995 a Boeing 757 (America West Flight 564) was heading west at about 39,000 feet. At the time in question the airliner was roughly above the town of Bovina, Texas (about 80 miles south-west of Amarillo) and the pilot, Captain Gene Tollefson, his First Officer John J. Waller and a flight

attendant were in the cockpit. Suddenly, at about 9.24pm, they all noted a row of white lights flash below them from left to right. The lights appeared to be part of an object and the crew kept their eyes on it as Waller contacted Albuquerque Air Traffic Control. He told the controller that they'd spotted "strobes" at their 3 o'clock position. The lights appeared to flash from left to right sequentially. He reported the size of the object as "unbelievable" – something between 300 feet and 400 feet long. The pilots also asked other planes in the vicinity whether they'd noted the lights[7].

While this was going on the controller called the closest USAF base (Cannon AFB – about twenty miles from Bovina), gave them the details as relayed by the crew and asked whether they could help with an explanation. It shows how the minds of such officials work in the aviation world that he told Cannon that "*It's that Roswell crap again*". Cannon responded to say they'd seen nothing

As the plane flew on, the crew watched the object against a thundercloud. It appeared to be cigar-shaped with lights across its longest dimension. However, they soon lost sight of it, at which time the controller returned to tell them the negative result from Cannon AFB and, when the aircraft confirmed that they could no longer see the object, signed off.

But it seems that the controller (whose callsign the 757 found out was PP) kept enquiring. The logs showed that he called someone called "Bigfoot" at 9.48pm. The female respondent at that callsign asked how far the sighting was from Holloman AFB (it was 220 miles) but could not assist further[8].

The 757's crew made a formal report of the sighting and even drew a picture – an elongated cigar shape with bright lights at both ends and a row of lights down the central length. The outsider, reading the air traffic control transcripts, cannot help but be impressed by the baffled sincerity of the aircrew of flight 564. The ATC controller was naturally sceptical but clearly

did his or her best to resolve the issue by contacting just about everyone they could think of on the night and possibly the next day too – although this cannot be confirmed.

The sighting, by two commercial pilots and a third crew member on one aircraft, plus probably another aircraft, qualifies this incident as one of the most compelling accounts of a large cigar-shaped object being seen in the skies – moving fast and hovering. And yet again we see the strange link between such objects and thunderstorms.

Weird objects have been reported many, many times as being close to such storms (see Hatton Gardens, 1809, Volume 1). If they were just balls of light one might imagine that they could be either ball-lightning or some as-yet-unknown cousin. But on this occasion the crew were absolutely certain of what they saw – it was an object with a defined cigar shape and lights.

Aurigny

The famous Aurigny sighting over Guernsey in 2007 involved not just one but two massive objects – yellow, cigar shapes were witnessed by two separate pilots in two separate aircraft (plus passengers and people on the ground). Captain Ray Bowyer watched the huge yellow, cigar-shaped thing for twenty minutes as it hovered over the British Channel Island of Guernsey, estimating it at about a mile across. He said it could have been a disc-shaped craft seen sideways on. The other pilot estimated its size as half a mile but concurred in all the other aspects of the case (for further details see “Cigar Shapes” in Chapter 7).

Hudson Valley

And then there are the huge triangular UFOs spotted during the Hudson Valley episodes and by lots of people across the world. In one case during the

Hudson Valley affair a jogger actually ran beneath a huge triangular object (see Volume 1).

The most interesting aspect of huge UFOs is – why? If they are real objects what size of creature are they carrying? Giants? Huge tanks containing large aquatic creatures? Or thousands of beings roughly human size? The immense objects seen by the Lancaster crew in 1943, by the 757 crew in 1995, and by the two airlines crews near Guernsey in 2007 are a real puzzle. If they contain nothing, then why build them so big? If they contain thousands of human-sized beings, are they tourists or invaders? Strangely the explanation that makes the most sense is that they contain giant creatures of some sort. If so it will be really interesting to see them (as long as they are not hostile).

Medium Size

Medium-sized UFOs seem to be the ones seen most frequently. They vary between About 20 feet and 200 feet in length or diameter (roughly the wingspan of a 747) and are the closest to what we'd probably expect to see if we believe that alien beings of approximately human size are interested in our planet. Objects of this size band have been reported by huge numbers of people including airline pilots and other professionals.

Small UFOs

Where the smallest of the UFOs are concerned we have evidence that they have been reported ever since the early 1940s (at least).

Foo-Fighters

Strange glowing globes were seen by aircrews on both sides of the Second World War. The crews of allied bomber formations watched them fly alongside, through the formations, and even dart at them head-on. A few

reports say that the glowing lights actually travelled through aircraft without damage.

New York, 2011

In August of 2011 a seventy-five year old boater was coming back upstream from New York on the Hudson River. He was headed for Newburgh but had misjudged his time so was only passing under the old girder-built Tappan Zee Bridge at about 8.30pm. This left him with about 30 miles to go; a lengthy journey at those speeds. As he got beyond the steelwork of the Tappan Zee he saw, about a mile upriver and several hundred yards off the shore of the town of Ossining (the Hudson is about two miles wide at that point), three white lights and two red lights zipping backwards and forwards across the water at the speed of a fast motor-boat.

The boater must have put them down to being jet skis for he carried on into the darkness, trying not to get too close to anyone crazy enough to be zipping about on jet skis in total darkness. He steered away from the lights – to the left – but was amazed to find, as he got closer, that the lights were not jet skis. In fact, they weren't even above the water.

He was intrigued so steered closer to where the lights were. He said they were small, about the size of a grapefruit, and that as he got closer they "came together" in a "pizza-sized" circle, started spinning rapidly and then just disappeared. The witness said he was only about twenty feet away when they did this. He stressed that he'd always been very sceptical of UFO reports but could not understand what he'd seen[9].

Skinwalker

A great many witnesses have reported blue and green globes a bit larger than a basketball whose insides swirl with a gaseous mixture of colours.

These globes are associated with intense feelings in the witnesses and have been reported at length by Colm Kelleher in his fascinating book which covers the events at the famous Skinwalker Ranch between about the mid-1990s and the early years of this century.

Rendlesham

Several people have seen soccer-ball sized things and there are many reports of UFOs around 6ft (2 metres) across. The object reported by Sgt Penniston in Rendlesham Forest was about nine feet across and maybe six to eight feet high.

Upstate New York

The two crew of a glider in upstate New York in 2015 reported three small UFOs around or above their glider (see Upper New York State in “Discs” in Chapter 5).

So, if for a moment we accept that all these things exist as physical objects, what is their purpose and why do they need to be of such widely differing sizes?

Logically one has to conclude that the only reason a civilisation would need a largish craft would be to carry beings who need to be there for reasons other than simple surveillance (because this could certainly be performed most easily by drones). No set of aliens who were advanced enough to travel through space would ever need such large objects to carry out simple monitoring.

One can make a reasonable presumption that tiny UFOs and brightly lit globes might be autonomous surveillance machines, but the huge UFOs strain

logic. The world's largest container ships are about 1,300 feet long, the Oasis-class cruise ships are 1,200 feet long and carry 6,000 people including crew. That's with a beam of just 200 feet. How many people of human size could a UFO half a mile in diameter carry? That's 2,600 feet. Probably 10,000 to 20,000 human-sized beings? And even if the passengers were treble human size those things could conceivably carry 2,000 to 4,000 beings.

Even for tourism that sounds like a lot of creatures! One might speculate that, if the passengers were of a water or even methane-breathing species, the tanks to contain them in cosy luxury would need to be of considerable size. The result would be very large craft carrying relatively few creatures. But that might sound too much like *Men in Black* for most readers' comfort.

Chapter 7

Shapes

This was really hard to put into words as it was something beyond what I can describe properly. It was difficult to wrap my brain around what I was seeing/had seen. [triangular object which changed direction instantly and flew blunt end first].

Female witness; 2016 British Columbia

… like the edge-on view of a discus … and it was rocking from side to side very slightly … but maintaining a very straight approach

British Test Pilot, Stan Hubbard, 1950, England

The shape of reported UFOs is another of the subject's enduring mysteries. In some ways the shapes have not changed a great deal since they were first recorded in the immediate post-war era. We still get reports of globes, discs, triangles, wedges, boomerangs, cylinders, spheres and even rectangles and cubes. Over the past eighty years, witnesses have told of seeing all these shapes and the reports have been pretty consistent over that span of time. In 1947 Kenneth Arnold reported wedge and boomerang shapes zipping between the mountains, in modern times the Turkish videographer Murat Yalcin Yalman took lengthy videos of objects in just those shapes hovering

over the Sea of Marmara. Over a century ago – in 1909 – a British police officer in Peterborough reported seeing a cigar-shaped object fly over the town. In 2007 an airline pilot reported two such objects over the Channel Islands. Disc-shaped objects were reported to the police by people who lived near Roswell in 1947 and a small disc shape was reported by the pilots of a glider in New York in 2015.

We'll look at some of these examples in a moment, but the relative consistency of shapes is not the only thing we should note. I've said it before, and I'll say it again: The shapes are all strangely unlike the space ships that our media portray. If UFOs were part of a process of mass delusion, of people being swept up in a myth, shouldn't the reported objects be much closer to the things our media portray as alien space ships? The five broad categories of shapes – discs, triangles, cigars, cylinders, and spheres – are still being reported to this day. Let's examine a few recent examples:

Disc

Probably the most common shape associated with "flying saucers" in the public mind but, arguably, not the most frequently-reported shape in practice. Nevertheless disc-shaped objects have a very long history, from the objects seen near Roswell in 1947 and by the British test pilot, Stan Hubbard in 1950, right through to this very day. It was such a shape that was seen whizzing around their aircraft by Portuguese Air Force pilots in 1982, and watched by many people hovering over the ramp in broad daylight at Chicago O'Hare Airport in 2006.

Many of the most famous accounts of alien abductions also feature disc-shaped craft as the source of the aliens who persecute the abductees. Betty and Barney Hill in 1961, Travis Walton in 1975, and Whitley Strieber in 1985, all described the object to which they were taken as disc-shaped.

There are also some great photos of disc-shaped UFOs – the Trent photos and the Mariana film from the 1950s, the stunning Hannah McRoberts photo from Canada in 1981, the Tyrone photo of 2002, and the Australian railway crossing photo of 2004. And somewhere in the depths of a US archive lie the photos that were taken of an object that actually landed at Edwards' Air Force Base in 1957 and which the astronaut, Colonel L Gordon Cooper swore, until the end of his life in 2004, had been hidden away by the US military. There are stacks of equivalents on the Internet, but most do not have the clarity or the credibility of the aforementioned. In modern times there have been a number of good examples of disc-shaped sightings including the object seen apparently changing shape in Kingston, Ontario in 2007 which is described in a later section.

Let's look at a few.

Waynesville, Ohio, 2001

The Waynesville sightings are a difficult-to-dismiss set of events. Reported in the Spring of 2001, they involved police officers and civilians seeing one or more strange objects in the sky near the small town of Waynesville in Ohio. They also involved a town called Lebanon (which is not the same one as that mentioned under the description of the Illinois sightings - the name of Lebanon is a popular one for American towns – there are at least five in five different States).

Unlike the sightings in Illinois in 2000, the Waynesville ones involved a circular, lighted object which, on the evening of April 24, was seen to the south by a couple at their home on Wilkerson Road. Their description of the object was that it was circular, silent, and had a big light which seemed to pulsate or change colour. They told the police at about ten fifteen local time that they could see a structure on it which looked like gridwork or cabling. A

Waynesville police officer was sent and not only confirmed the sighting but spotted a second, similar object. The officer told the dispatcher that there were two of them, staying absolutely stationary and pulsing about five different colours. The officers and the owner of the house watched the objects through binoculars (which is how they made out the "structure").

The police dispatchers phoned Wright-Patterson AFB and local airports but got negative responses when they asked whether anyone had aircraft in the air that night. The police and the householders were watching the object to the south while dispatchers from Warren County were watching it to the north from Lebanon, at the same time as another police officer from Caesar's Creek was watching it to the west of his location. As even more officers from the Ohio State Patrol arrived on the scene, the objects – probably three at this stage – receded and disappeared.

In a strange echo of the events at Exeter, New Hampshire in 1965 a woman reported to the Ohio State Patrol that, at about 5am on April 26, she had been "chased" down Route 122 near Genntown by a triangular object with "super-bright lights".

With the US Air Force and local airports denying that aircraft were in the vicinity and with so many witnesses from so many different vantage-points it has been difficult to conceive of conventional explanations for the sightings. A few sceptics said that some of the sightings may have been the star Sirius which was particularly bright at that time, but that would not explain all the sightings (from very different angles) nor would it cover the original testimony of civilians and police that it was circular and had structure.

The Railway Crossing, 2004

A little to the north of the city of Melbourne, Australia lies the municipality of Whittlesea, and just to the west runs the north-south railway

line from Melbourne to Seymour. A highway called Beveridge Road runs west from Whittlesea to cross the railroad on a level-crossing in open country about six miles from the town. The safety of the crossing, guarded by signs and lights in the usual way, is the responsibility of the local council in Whittlesea.

On a bright summer's day, January 15, 2004, at about 2.15pm, Whittlesea Council's traffic engineer and a colleague were conducting a routine inspection of the level crossing. For the safety records they took about a dozen digital photos of the crossing, some from the west and some from the east. It was just a routine check. Everything looked okay and the crossing was in good working order. Having taken the photos and taken official note of the condition of the crossing and its machinery, the pair returned to the Council offices in Whittlesea.

Once back in the cool of the office, the traffic inspector checked his photos, presumably before attaching them to his official report on the status of the crossing. As he was doing this he found a strange object in the right-hand sky of one of the photos. He passed it around his colleagues, but no-one could explain it and, to this day, no-one else has been able to say what it was.

If you check it out online you'll notice that, whatever it was, it looks very similar to the object photographed in Tyrone, Pennsylvania a couple of years earlier – the classic "flying saucer" (see Chapter 8). The theory that the inspector and his colleagues came up with was that the object – whatever it was – must have been moving quite fast and that it crossed the sky quickly just as he took one of the photos. He would almost certainly have been looking at the crossing itself while taking the photo and would probably not have noticed something whiz across the top[10].

What I think fascinates the outsider most in all these observations is the broad similarity of them across the modern era. As long as we've had

relatively portable cameras people have been snapping shots of very strange objects which bear an impressive similarity: discs with domes on top and sometimes on the bottom. There's no way of telling how large or small the "Railway Crossing UFO" was but twenty or thirty feet across would seem likely.

Was it photo-shopped by bored Council employees? Several researchers have studied it and say not.

Cardiff, 2008

All police helicopters in the UK are crewed by a highly experienced civilian pilot (usually ex-military) and two fully trained police "Tactical Flight Officers". This particular incident was not subjected to an investigation by the aviation safety people but is included primarily due to the very descriptive testimony given by the crew[11]

On June 7, 2008 an EC-135 police helicopter was hovering at about 500 feet, prior to landing at RAF St Athan, near Cardiff in South Wales[12]. The pilot was waiting for clearance when suddenly he and his observers saw an object flying directly at them from below. The pilot took evasive action and, according to some sources, then chased the object across the Bristol Channel towards the coast of Devon before running low on fuel and having to break off.

The crew reported the object as "flying-saucer-shaped". A reporter from the *Daily Telegraph* confirmed this description with a South Wales Police spokesman who said that:

> *They [the crew] are convinced it was a UFO. It sounds far-fetched, but they know what they saw.*

It’s a fascinating account because the crew of that police helicopter were hovering at just 500 feet above the ground and the object came at them from below. It seems fair to assume therefore that this disc-shaped object was witnessed by three trained observers at a distance of less than 500 feet. There is a video online purporting to be that from this chase but there is nothing on the film to confirm that this was a police-camera and, as usual in such cases, no corroboration[13]. Nevertheless, a report like this from three trained observers in a police helicopter is just about as gold-plated as they come.

Tyldesley, England, 2009

From a location near Manchester, BUFORA, the British UFO Research Association, lists a fascinating sighting in September 2009 which included some well-drawn illustrations. It occurred at about half past ten in the evening on Saturday September 12 in clear cool weather. The observers had the Moon behind them.

During a family event, a single witness saw, for about ten minutes, an object with lights. There were evidently two other witnesses, but they refused to give BUFORA a statement. The reporter was outside the house having a smoke when he and two others saw a bright white light over the fields in the distance. It appeared to be hovering about thirty feet off the ground. The light lost some intensity and pulsed for a second or so before the object moved to the observer’s right; not far but at a relatively high speed. Now it seemed to be about sixty or seventy feet above the ground, but the light was still pulsing. It hovered there for a little before moving at very high speed to the observer’s left. Again, not far. At neither position did the reporter see anything but a light.

It hovered around seventy feet off the ground for a few moments and then started to move fast towards the three witnesses. The light grew brighter and

then dimmed before becoming a smaller white light. By now it had reduced the distance between the original position of about a mile from the observers to a couple of hundred yards. As it approached and rose to about 150 feet they could see that it was an object, not just a light. There was no sound as it floated towards them. They could now make out dim lights on the underside. The main witness said that he could see that it was probably disc-shaped with a rounded "under-belly". At this point it rose a bit higher – to around 250 feet – but continued to hover above the observers.

The middle under belly was lit with a circular light which was slightly domed. From the circle in the centre there were four light panels that got wider as they got to the rim of the object, the four light panels were a dimmer light than the circular light[14]. The witness estimated its diameter as around fifty feet. The object then rose vertically at high speed until it became a dot in the sky and then disappeared. In common with countless other testimonies, the witness said that the three did not speak of the incident at all for the rest of the evening. The main reporter stressed that he was well used to aircraft and their lighting because he worked under the flight path to Liverpool Airport.

The drawings of the object are detailed and very similar to other such drawings from the past. Sceptics would say that the reason is simple – they were copied from, or modelled on, earlier supposed sightings. It is possible of course. Anything is possible. But like most sceptical arguments about UFOs this one falls smack into the "could have been" category. Yes, it could be a hoax. But just because it "could have been" does not prove that it was.

Pennsylvania, 2010

One could fill a hundred books with just the most plausible accounts from of UFO observations around the world. Even without going to the bother of

translating anything, sightings from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United States, South Africa, India, Eire, and the UK (not to mention English-speaking Africa) would serve to more than fill that small library. Consequently, one feels a little mean in having to limit the stories in this particular book. In the end I've included only those which carry a message which is deeper than merely the sighting; such as corroboration of the way colours can be seen as being extraordinary (super-real) or how specific colours can be seen very regularly, or how the authorities can, apparently, ignore radar contacts as being utterly unimportant.

MUFON has one report on their site which is notable for just such a reason. It occurred somewhere in Pennsylvania on June 3, 2010. A private pilot was sitting on his south-facing porch watching a commercial airliner flying northeast (i.e. roughly towards him). He noticed that there was a white or silver, metallic, disc-shaped object of some sort flying close to and above the plane. The aircraft was leaving a contrail, but the object was not. Two other people on the porch watched with him as the object maintained station for a moment above the airliner and then shot up into the sky at a seventy degree angle[15].

The most compelling element of this report is that the witnesses reported that the object flew "tipped slightly on one end". Again and again, we come across reports of that strange characteristic. Why would anyone make that up? More to the point why would any vehicle fly tilted at an angle? Yet discs are often said to travel either tipped slightly at an angle or even on their edges (triangular objects are often seen flying blunt end first and cylindrical objects flying straight up on their ends).

The unconventionality of the object's attitude not only lends credibility to the report (see Operation Mainbrace in Volume 1) but also adds yet another quantum of weight to the mountains of reports stating the same thing. Why

do the objects that people report in the sky have such weird and non-intuitive characteristics?

Such things should form the core of any investigation. Not just Philip Klass' question: Why the lights? But why the strange colours, what does the flashing mean, why the appearance of flying tipped slightly or even standing on end? Why the silence or near silence? Why are they able to defy inertia and gravity? These, and similar questions, are what sustained research should try to answer.

Kansas City, 2012

Later in this book I will discuss the strange 1954 case of a British airliner flying towards Goose Bay in Canada. On that occasion several objects paced the aircraft for eighteen minutes. More than half a century later, we have an account of another object pacing a modern aircraft. The report was called in by phone by the pilot, who wished to remain anonymous (for obvious reasons) but MUFON also received a separate report from a motorist which appears to have corroborated the air-crew statement.

The account sounds unbelievable and if it hadn't been reported by pilots we'd probably discount it (rightly or wrongly). The pilots said that they were approaching Kansas City from St Louis on July 30, 2012 when the co-pilot noticed an object pacing them off to their right. Their first impulse was to contact air traffic control – and they did so. ATC said that there were no contacts near their aircraft.

When the object moved slightly ahead and to the right, only about a hundred yards from the plane, the pilot said that it was a disc-shaped object with a dome on the top, silver-grey in colour, with three bluey-white lights on the bottom and one on the top. At one hundred yards this has to be one of the closest encounters between an unidentified object and an aircraft in which the

crew got an extended opportunity to examine it.

At that point, we are told, it moved suddenly underneath the aircraft and to the left, from which position it continued to pace them. This time the two pilots evidently discussed the incident and decided not to tell the air traffic controllers what was going on. They even lied when ATC asked whether the unidentified object was still in view. They said it wasn't.

This is an important point because the pilots were taking a huge risk. If that object had turned out to be a danger to the aircraft, they were risking their professional careers by denying that it was still flying alongside the plane. Clearly, they calculated that the danger was much greater from possible ridicule and career-damage should they start telling a story of a disc-shaped UFO formation flying with them. It also means that they must have been almost certain that the object was not of this Earth. If, in their judgement it was man-made they'd have reported it without a second thought and probably asked ATC to warn it off or for a change of course to avoid it. Instead they lied, banking on their gut-feeling that this was not made on Earth and that it presented no danger to them. Many experienced pilots have testified that their encounters with UFOs made them feel that the objects were under intelligent control, that the control was extremely competent, and that they felt themselves and their aircraft to be in no danger. Yet another strange attribute of UFO sightings! How do people somehow understand that there is no danger from these objects? Is it merely that the movement is so precise and "controlled" that they know that it would not collide with them?

This particular UFO continued to track the aircraft. The silver-grey disc stayed with them for twenty-two minutes and even slowed down with them as they slowed into their assigned approach pattern. As they got closer to the ground the object left. And when it did, it shot to the south at a speed faster than any aircraft this ex-military pilot had ever known. The report

specifically said that what these two pilots saw was not a man-made aircraft. It also said that passengers were discussing the object as they disembarked but that the crew – including the cabin crew – did not report it.

The motorist's report, also submitted to MUFON, cited a disc-shaped blue-white object which hovered in the sky, moved a little to the right and then shot upwards at very high speed. He called it a "very, very scary object".

The frustrating thing about such observations – as with thousands of others – is that we have such limited detail. There's no telling what it was – if, indeed, the pilots and the motorist saw the same thing – but there is an undeniable degree of credibility here.

Gatwick, 2012

This is one of those really strange incidents which, on the surface, looks easy to understand but is a little less so when you probe a bit. What happened was that, on Sunday December 30, 2012 at about ten to nine in the morning a Boeing 777 airliner (possibly Cathay Pacific) was established on final approach to runway 26L at Gatwick Airport, just south of London. As the second-largest of four main airports serving the capital of the UK, Gatwick is extremely busy. Many people are still amazed when they learn that, although Gatwick has two runways, only one of them can be used at a time (usually 26L). Until 2016 it was the busiest single-runway airport in the world and it still ranks number two after Mumbai. The crew reported the incident as a near-miss with another aerial object and as such it was officially investigated.

The incident has both visual and radar aspects but there is no official confirmation that the two were connected. The timings and locations, however, are close enough to imply that they were. All the timings in this section are from the official UK Airprox report (Airprox 2012175) and are in twenty-four hour clock style – that is, ten to nine in the morning local time is

0850 and ten to nine in the evening is 2050.

So, let’s get back to the instrument-packed flight deck of the triple-7 as the two active pilots concentrated on getting the massive aircraft safely onto the tarmac. A third pilot was sitting behind them on the jump seats. It may not seem fast when you are watching a landing from the comfort of your seat above the wing, but a Boeing 777 is doing around 160 mph as it heads for the threshold. The flight crew need to keep sharp. The captain normally flies the huge beast while the first officer watches out and calls off distances, speeds and altitude so that the pilot can keep his or her eyes on the runway. Neither has any time for gazing at the scenery but both are constantly alert for one thing: hazards on the approach path. Because aircraft are slowing down for landing they are particularly vulnerable to anything which upsets a carefully planned approach at speeds that are very close to a stall.

The wintery-green English countryside was flashing below the plane as it buffeted its way through the low-level turbulence when the first officer’s concerned voice cut through the ear-phone static. He told the captain that there were two objects below them and almost on the glide path. The captain acknowledged and they continued the approach, the co-pilot keeping his hands on the throttles should the pilot order an emergency go-around.

The aircraft eventually flew over the objects and reported to the controllers that they were flat, disk-shaped and probably silver. The captain said they were only about 150 to 200 feet below the aircraft as it passed over them. He said they looked like toys. By that time, the discs were situated one each side of the flight path at about 1,500 feet (see below). The Airprox report is ambiguous as to where, exactly, the aircraft passed the objects. It gives two distances for the event: between four and five nautical miles, and between five and six nautical miles from touchdown.

All three pilots on the flight deck saw the objects. The Airprox report says

that the 777 travelled the distance between six miles and five miles from touchdown between 0853:12 and 0853:43 – some thirty-one seconds to transit the nautical mile. This is quite slow and is therefore probably an estimate of the distance. It should have taken roughly twenty-six seconds but let's not be picky. During that period the aircraft descended from 2,100 feet to 1,800 feet which would have put the altitude of the objects at not less than 1,600 feet and not more than 1,900 feet (but again, the 1,500 feet stated height of the objects was an estimation by the crew who had other things on their minds).

In the landing pattern, that morning, the Triple-7 was being closely followed by a Boeing 767 and an Airbus A319. The crews of each of those following aircraft also reported the objects – although the Airprox report provides no details as to where and when. And this is a little strange, as one would imagine that the Airprox Board would have been extremely anxious to get to the bottom of two objects threatening the safety of huge airliners as they are in a delicate part of their flight. Why were the other two crews not questioned closely as to the behaviour and location of the objects?

The Airprox report classified this as a "sighting report on final approach", which, not to put too fine a point on it, was pretty tautological and distinctly unhelpful. The Board classified the risk level of the incident as low (category D), assuming, essentially, that these objects were "toys". There was no sign of rotors so the Airprox Board assumed they must have been small helium-filled blimps. The report goes on to say:

There are saucer-shaped or blimp-shaped model ac [aircraft], up to 4ft in diameter, on sale to the public.

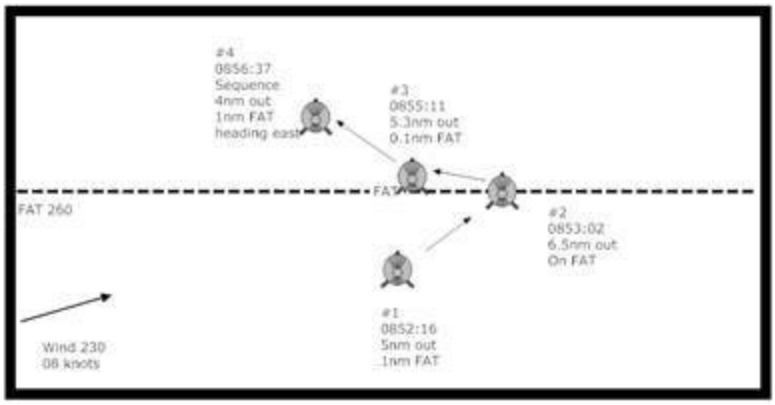
The report specifically bemoans the fact that there were no other data and yet it contains quite a lot of data which appears to have been ignored and does not report any of the facts which might have been gleaned from the

other two aircraft. I am also speaking of details about radar returns from the 10-centimetre approach radar which were logged by operators during the various approaches discussed in the report. They may or may not have been relevant, but the report simply provides the diagrams without addressing their possible import. The outsider is left wondering why, if the radar returns were felt to be so irrelevant, they are included in the report, when other possibly extremely relevant data concerning where and when the following aircraft saw the objects is omitted. Neither does the investigation appear to have attempted to conduct triangulation between the different witness accounts in order to estimate the speed and movements of the objects.

So, just to recap. Three civil airliners – a minimum of seven pilots – spotted two flat, disc-shaped objects just below the flight path to Gatwick's runway 26L. At their closest they were about 200 feet below the first aircraft and about 1,600 to 1,900 above ground level in an 8 knot wind (about three times a brisk walking speed).

While all this was going on, the approach radar recorded "returns" – that is, flying objects – on or near the flightpath. The Airprox report gives four examples, with times and rough positions but no altitudes. From these details I have put together a very rough map of the positions of the returns in relation to the Flight Approach Track (FAT) into Gatwick 26L. The unknown returns are numbered one to four in order of their appearance. The first three disappeared after one sweep of the radar while the last return persisted for several sweeps. These radar data are extremely interesting and might be even more so if we had altitude data as well. Distances are given in Nautical Miles.

Anomalous Returns at Gatwick, 2012



TOYS ?
between 1 and 2 - 1.8 nm in 46 secs = c145kts
between 2 and 3 - 1.2 nm in 2 mins 9 secs = c35kts
between 3 and 4 - 2.75 nm and returned 1 nm - total c3.75 nm in 1 min 26 secs = c150kts

The fascinating thing about these returns is that, in order to be where the Gatwick approach radar found them, the objects would have to be doing two things that blimps or saucer-shaped UAVs could not:

travel at up to 150 kts (172mph), and

travel against/across an 8kt wind at 35kts (40mph) and for another return, at 150kts.

The general public can, indeed, buy helium remote control blimps, some of which are quite large, and they are certainly sold with saucer-shaped

envelopes. The problem with the Airprox explanation is that these “toy” blimps are pretty useless outdoors except in a dead-calm and they might manage five or ten mph but certainly no more with their weak electric rotors. They’d get blown away by any sort of breeze never mind an aircraft slipstream and jet wash. The main outdoor types (as opposed to the domestic ones just described) are commercial, very expensive, and are generally flown by professional advertising and video/photography companies that would never risk such expensive equipment (or their licences) under the descent corridor into a major airport and 150’ to 200’ from an aircraft. Their licence to fly would be revoked in a second.

If you take the first movement of the object recorded on the radar return – from position #1 to position #2 – it must have been doing roughly 140 knots. It had the benefit of an 8 knot tail-wind but no toy blimp could add the extra 130 knots (getting on for 150 mph). By the time whatever they were got to travel between positions 3 and 4 their rough speed was around 150 knots – about 170 mph – across the wind.

Because the Airprox Board appears to have neglected to attempt to match the sightings by aircrew with the radar returns, we have no way of knowing whether the returns match or do not. But if they do (and why include them in the report if they do not?) the small, flat, disk-shaped objects seen by the crews of three aircraft could definitely not have been toy blimps, were certainly not commercial ones either, and were definitely not rotor-driven drones.

So, if these objects were never going to be domestic, toy blimps in that wind and at that altitude, were not commercial drones, and were not two expensive advertising blimps – what were they?

PS: The reader might care to note that Gatwick had a massive “drone” scare in 2018 due to reports of these things being spotted by aircrew on the approaches to the Gatwick runway. The authorities took the reports so seriously that they took the unique decision to close the airport. With short intermissions it was closed for a couple of days while the police scoured the region for rogue drone operators. But, search as they might, the police never found anyone who could have flown such objects near the runway. They did arrest two people but found that they could not have been responsible.

The Oakville Photos, 2014

The suburb of Oakville lies to the south of St Louis, on the Mississippi River, and it was here that, in June 2014, a lady and her son reported objects in the sky as they were driving home on the Interstate. At about twenty to eight in the evening of June 8, 2014 the two were driving east on the I-270 and I-255 towards Oakville. They exited the interstate just to the north of Oakville on exit two, which leads onto Telegraph Road.

MUFON case report #57046 is very detailed and well worth downloading and reading. The lady and her two sons (a 14 year-old in the passenger seat and a ten year old in back) were driving roughly south-easterly. As they approached Exit 2 they spotted a bright reflection roughly ahead of them above the Jefferson Barracks Bridge. They described it as a grey, metallic object, the size of a cent held at arm’s length. The eldest boy was quick and, starting at 7.47 and fourteen seconds, took a dozen or so photos. The family was intrigued so, after exiting the Interstate, they turned around and retraced their path to try to see whether they could see any more. But the object had gone.

Later the witnesses felt there had been two objects in the sky, but they were not entirely certain. However, the teenager’s emailed account, which is in the

MUFON report, was very objective[16]. MUFON's Director of Research, Robert Powell, analysed the photos in some detail. Due to the car's speed at the time – about 45mph to 50mph – he ruled out insects and birds/bats and sent the photos to the French IPACO research agency for further analysis. Of the photographs, the French analyst only found one, the first, to be possibly an insect. The other photos, he concluded, showed an object which was about twenty feet in length/diameter and travelling quite fast.

It has proved almost impossible to explain in conventional terms and the outsider, impartially scanning the multiple photos, will find it all extremely challenging. An object tracked over many photos and all showing something at that very familiar angle of tilt! There are parallels with the Whittlesea photo, ten years earlier. Another fast-moving disc.

Upper New York State, 2015

We are used to hearing about all sorts of things being seen by the pilots and crew of powered aircraft but only a few years ago two people in a glider were buzzed by an unusual object which then departed at speed with two others.

A hoax? Probably not. The event was investigated in some detail by NARCAP and the report is featured on their website if you'd like to read the detail. In essence, the event went like this: An experienced pilot was taking a passenger for a glider flight south from Freehold Airport (which lies about twenty or thirty miles southwest of Albany in up-state New York) towards the Windham-Blackhead range of mountains. At the time of the incident their Grob glider was headed northeast – roughly back towards the airfield – when the passenger in the back of the tandem glider spotted something moving at their one o'clock position, much lower, and on an opposite track. The pilot saw it too and they both watched as it passed them. They were fascinated by the light coming off it which, according to the pilot, was prismatic and

irregular – that is, he could see irregular bursts of light which had the qualities of all the colours of the rainbow.

The pilot was so interested that he banked left into a turn which eventually took them back the way they had come. By the time they'd got around to pointing roughly south again the object had travelled a mile or two further south, executed a u-turn and returned north climbing as it came. Noting this, the glider pilot continued his turn until he was once more pointing north. The glider crew watched in amazement as the object calmly took up station on their right wing about 150 feet (50 yards) off.

The turn of the object and its return to the glider would, in NARCAP's calculations, have required a speed of anything between about 400mph and 1,200mph. Our intrepid pilot continued his left hand turn and the strange object simply tracked him all the way around, but on the *outside* of his turn (quite a feat given the speeds involved). As the turn progressed the pilot increased his rate of bank – and therefore the speed of his turn – but the object not only kept up but smoothly swapped across to track his left wing. In performing this little trick, the object first moved directly in front of the glider and then about thirty yards from the left wing. At no time did those in the glider hear anything from the object. They only heard the normal swoosh of the slipstream over their own aircraft.

The object which tracked the glider was small, only about three feet in diameter and a couple of feet deep. It was disc shaped with a small domed protrusion on its silver or white top surface and a domed black bottom. It had no visible means of propulsion. But the really weird thing (and who would make this up?) was that it had a long tube sticking out from the black under-surface which had three white "fins" sticking out at regular intervals. The tube did not move in relation to the rest of the object and appeared fixed in position. The pilot estimated that, from the top of the silvery top surface to

the tip of the rod sticking out below, was about six feet. And, while all this was going on, the passenger looked up through the canopy and saw, above them, two more strange objects (he likened them to being discs looking like the brims of hats)

It is not specifically stated, but one has to presume that the pilot and his passenger were pretty spooked by now, and the pilot understandably opted to return to the airfield immediately. He put the nose down, accelerated a little and flew off to the east-northeast. The objects departed together in a westerly direction.

The pilot reported the incident to the New York State police and it seems they alerted the FAA who sent an investigator. The FAA representative checked most of the obvious suspects and then contacted NARCAP – which would have been a strange thing to do unless the FAA representative had come to a pretty firm conclusion that this object had nothing to do with local drones or model aircraft.

NARCAP's report goes into the matter of advanced drones because there was a drone testing area about eighty miles to the north. The pilot was shown photos of all the major drones of circular plan but he said none were like the object that circled him and his passenger. The report's conclusion was as follows:

> *Considering the apparently high velocity of this object(s), its ability to stop suddenly and then form up on the glider while maintaining a constant separation distance and then rapidly change its position relative to the glider on its opposite side along with its lack of any visible means of propulsion or lift, its apparent lack of any propulsion-related noise, and its continuously vertical orientation, it is unlikely that this object was a UAV, at least of any currently known unclassified*

types.

NARCAP has left the case open but currently lists the object as unidentified.

Triangle/Wedge/Boomerang

Seeing a light in the sky behaving strangely is one thing. Seeing a vast triangular monster at tree-top height is quite another. Even though Kenneth Arnold first reported wedge and boomerang-shaped UFOs back in 1947, there is a commonly held impression that these shapes are somehow "modern"; that they have only been seen since about the time of the Hudson Valley wave in the early eighties when huge triangular objects were reported hovering over Interstate highways, lakes, and villages.

The main Hudson Valley incidents are discussed in Volume 1 and we have already noted the very detailed piece of research undertaken by J Allen Hynek's team and reported in *Night Siege*. But it is worth remembering that what people mainly reported were very large triangular objects hovering or moving slowly. These giants were seen from below as complex structures with sub-sections and what looked like girder-work. Similar things were witnessed in Belgium in the early 1990s, and there have been a multitude of recent sightings in Canada, the US Midwest, and England (the Midlands and Devon amongst other sightings).

Unlike discs, triangles, often seen as wedges or boomerang shapes, have equivalents in conventional aircraft. Although not unknown in the latter half of the twentieth century (the old Gloster Javelin of the 1950s, the Convair Hustler, Concorde, etc.) the shape – either in pure delta, modified delta, or in canard-delta form – is now quite popular, especially in Europe and India. The result is that there are usually a number of conventional aircraft which can be

mistaken for “unidentified” objects. There are big differences, however, between man-made aircraft and what are reported as credible UFOs. They may share shapes but UFOs are generally reported as silent (not something you could say about a Typhoon fighter), can hover at almost any altitude (not an attribute of any man-made aircraft except a balloon/dirigible or a helicopter), and able to fly at extremely high speeds, turn at ninety-degree angles and fly blunt-end first (again not something conventional aircraft can do).

There have been numerous credible sightings of very strange triangular objects in recent times, of which the following are some good examples.

Manchester, England, 1995

In January of 1995 a British Airways Boeing 737 nearing the end of a flight from Milan, Italy, had a near miss as it was approaching Manchester Airport[17]. The pilot registered it as an incident and a UK Air Miss investigation was mounted. The report from this investigation is slightly unusual in that it discusses possible causes in a relatively relaxed manner and even commends the crew on their courage in submitting such a report[18].

On January 6 at about 6.48pm the 737 was between eight and nine nautical miles south east of Manchester airport. It was descending through 4,000 feet over the Pennines on its approach, heading north at around 200 knots with good visibility against a 30 knot wind from the north west. They were just flying over the tops of some cumulus clouds when the first officer saw an object flash down the right-hand side of the aircraft at high speed. The object had lights and he span around to track it as it went past. His view lasted only about two seconds. There appeared to be no sound and both pilots noted the complete absence of wake turbulence.

The conversation with the air traffic controller highlights the coolness of

the crew – especially the somewhat sardonic final transmission (from the Air Miss Report)[19]:

B737 (1848) - 'Manchester, Speedbird 5061, we just had something go down the right-hand side just above us very fast.'

Manchester - 'Well, there's nothing seen on radar. Was it, er, an ac [aircraft]?'

B737 - 'Well, it had lights, it went down the starboard side very quick.'

Manchester - 'And above you?'

B737 - 'er, just slightly above us, yeh.'

Manchester - 'Keep an eye out for something, er, I can't see anything at all at the moment so, er, must have, er, been very fast or gone down very quickly after it passed you I think.'

B737 - 'OK. Well, there you go!'

The First Officer said the object was wedge-shaped with what could have been a black stripe down the side. It was quite large – somewhere between a light aircraft and a business jet in size – and it did not appear to deviate in the slightest with respect to his aircraft. The captain also saw the object and said that it had a number of white lights down the side. Both pilots agreed that, whatever it was, it was solid and not a kite or a balloon.

Nothing appeared on radar. The investigators looked into hang gliders, paragliders and microlights but discounted them and also failed to find any military activity which would account for the incident. They could not entirely discount the possibility that unannounced civil or military activity might have spilled over from adjacent uncontrolled airspace but this was felt to be an unlikely explanation given the number of radar stations in the area and the lack of wake turbulence.

Unusually, the investigating group commended the two pilots on having the courage to submit such a report and went on to say:

> *Reports such as these are often the object of derision, but the Group hopes that this example will encourage pilots who experience unusual sightings to report them without fear of ridicule.*
> *Unfortunately, the nature and identity of this object remains unknown. To speculate about extra-terrestrial activity, fascinating though it may be, is not within the Group's remit and must be left to those whose interest lies in that field.*

The report said that lack of radar contact is not necessarily unusual if "weather suppressors" are active due to conditions. It explains that, in those circumstances, a radar set could interpret a non-transponding primary target as weather and disregard it. Although it appears that one member of the Board stuck to the theory that it might have been a rogue microlight pilot, the report concluded

Further talks with the microlight experts on this idea highlighted the extreme improbability; the strong wind, terrain and darkness would have rendered such a flight almost suicidal. Despite exhaustive investigations the reported object remains untraced. … The incident therefore remains unresolved.

Plus of course, microlights do not have "lights down the side".

Just a final thought. Why would any radar system be set up to ignore non-transponding primary targets at those altitudes? Weather suppression is common and a stationary target may be mistaken as weather but this was clearly a fast-moving primary target. Are we saying that a non-transponding, fast-moving military jet headed straight for an airliner would have been

ignored by the ATC radar?

Illinois, 2000

These famous sightings are known by aficionados as the “Illinois Cop Sightings”. The main ones occurred at between 4am and 5am on January 5, 2000 when multiple police officers reported a large triangular object with no less than two rows of lights as it glided silently over them. Between the towns of Highland and Dupo (to the south of St Louis) there were five separate police sightings of the object. It was said to be able to pivot and to accelerate rapidly.

At about 4am the owner of a miniature golf course saw an object which he likened to a three-storey flying house with brightly-lit windows. It was the size, he said, of a football field and was moving relatively slowly north-east to south-west. The man drove to the local police station and they alerted a neighbouring force in Lebanon whose dispatchers asked their officers to look out for the object.

An officer from Lebanon saw an elongated triangular object, with bright white lights, moving slowly about 300 yards away. It pivoted – that is, it turned on its vertical axis – and then sped off towards the town of Shiloh. There was no noise from whatever it was. Another police officer in Shiloh reported an arrowhead-shaped object moving fast across the sky – again without noise. Yet another officer in Millstadt reported that the object was like a fat arrowhead and that it passed over at between 500 feet and 1,000 feet.

From the police officers’ testimony, it is clear that an object flew roughly southwest from Highland over Lebanon, Shiloh, Millstadt and then turned northwest to Dupo. Nearby Scott Airforce base said they had nothing in the air at that time and other checks eliminated a number of other possibilities

such as the local Boeing plant.

The “Illinois Cop Sightings” are very well documented and extremely compelling. The descriptions from totally separate police officers match each other in most details. It’s possible there was more than one object, but the reports tend to be fairly consecutive and the event is usually reported as a single object being seen by multiple witnesses. The fact that those witnesses were on-duty police-officers gives the incident considerable credibility, and its similarity to reports from the Hudson Valley in the 1980s, from Belgium in the 1990s, and England in the 2000s seems to show that extremely large, triangular objects fly regularly through the skies of the western world.

UK Wave 2000-2017

The UK is often regarded as a small country, but geographically it stretches from the thousand-year-old Crown Dependencies of Jersey and the other Channel Islands in the south, to the cold fastnesses of the Shetland Isles which are almost as close to Norway as they are to mainland Scotland. West to east the UK extends from Belleek in Northern Ireland to Lowestoft in Suffolk. By air that’s around 1,200 miles north to south and 550 miles west to east.

That size means there is plenty of space in which people can spot UFOs. Over the years, such objects have been reported from every corner. As we saw in Volume 1, the UK experience of the phenomenon has closely paralleled that of America, with “airships” being seen in the 1890s and early 1900s, “Foo Fighters” plaguing bomber crews during World War Two, and “Ghost Rockets” and “Flying Saucers” taking over from about the end of that war. But the fact is that, over the course of the past seventy years, the experience of the Americans and the British has been mirrored in most other

nations from Belgium to Australia and from Chile to China.

The apparent advent of a different shape of “flying saucer” has caused much mirth among the sceptics. Why, they ask, have UFOs changed shape over the decades? Are we dealing with a fashion-shift among UFO-geeks? First there were fiery globes whizzing around bomber formations, then there were discs zipping over New Mexico, and then we had a period of cigar-shaped things floating in the sky. But, they argue, we’ve now grown bored with those shapes and everyone is seeing triangles. The sceptic’s problem is still the same, though. They still tend to rely on generalisations to support their arguments. It all sounds very credible, but the unfortunate fact is that triangles, discs, cigar-shapes, Saturn-shapes (in fact all of the shapes) have been reported since the very earliest sightings of strange things in the sky and are still being seen.

If one examines the hundreds of UFO reports from a sample of nations – say, the USA, UK, Belgium and France – they show virtually the same range of types of sighting and shapes of objects, and that range remains the same whether you are looking at the 1950s or the 2010s.

That little diversion was necessary to ensure that you don’t run away with the idea that only triangular UFOs are spotted these days, or that *only* triangular UFOs are seen in places like Belgium and the UK. Sometimes a particular type of unidentified object is seen for a specific period of time in a specific location and we tend, quite naturally, to consider that to be a “wave”. Given enough time one could find “waves” of different types of UFO almost anywhere in the world. For example, during the 1939-1945 period we might establish a wave of fiery globes and lights (the foo-fighters) and during the late 1940s a “wave” of discs being sighted in the southwest of the USA. But other shapes were also reported during those timeframes, e.g. cylindrical, disc, cigar shapes, etc. The same applies to the Hudson Valley, Belgium, and

the UK. Triangular objects may make up a large proportion of sightings over a specific period of time but people also saw other shapes, too.

In the mid-1980s and mid-1990s the Hudson Valley and nearby States and counties received what appeared to be the concentrated attention of one or more triangular objects. They were reported as huge, slow moving wedges, as boomerang-shaped objects moving fast and turning on a dime, and as objects with three “flat” lights at each corner of what looked like a triangle. Sometimes one or more of those lights would suddenly speed off in a different direction. UFOs just love fooling us.

By far the best review of the subject is that by David Marler, which was published in 2013 (*Triangular UFOs – An Estimate of the Situation*). Marler’s treatment of the subject is an excellent (and all too rare) example of a well-balanced, well-written book on the subject of unidentified objects. It is down-to-earth and sensible but also extremely detailed. The most sobering aspect is that, in Marler’s own admission, the book deals only with *some* of the huge number of examples of triangular UFO cases. He also discusses a good many reports of such objects over the United Kingdom.

Sometimes a triangle turns out to be only one half of a diamond or square-shaped object The example below is from 1967 but the briefest glance at some of the modern videos from the Internet Age on any decent UFO website will show you that such formations of lights have been seen in very recent times too. On October 24, 1967, an unusual cross-shaped formation of lights was reported in England. What appeared to be four lights in a diamond formation were spotted by two police officers, PCs Clifford Waycott, and Roger Willey.

From their patrol car, travelling between Okehampton and Holsworthy in Devon, they followed the lights for about fifteen miles through the night. At times, they said, the lights appeared to slow and even stop for them to catch

up and then whiz away again. Two such objects appeared and neither made any sound. The Ministry of Defence used the standard excuse of the officers being misled by seeing the planet Venus through the lower atmosphere, but neither officer was convinced and, to be fair, the explanation did not really deal with how the object could be perceived as having four bright lights, slowing down or halting in the sky and then accelerating away, or how two such objects could be seen in the sky at the same time. The Devon "Fiery Cross" incident is a justifiably famous case and, to this day, no-one has satisfactorily explained it. In olden days it may well have been seen as a religious omen, but it could equally have been a square-shaped UFO standing and travelling on one corner.

As David Marler shows, triangular UFOs have been seen over the UK for many years but have become particularly noticeable during the first two decades of the current century. The reasons are difficult to pin down but, as we can show that triangular objects have been reported for decades, it cannot be to do with fashion. Possible explanations might include a tendency for the press to print such reports because they are relatively novel and lend a new twist to the flying saucer story, or it may be that people are more willing to report such shapes because others have done so. There is also the fact, as discussed above, that there are many more aircraft these days whose shapes could be roughly described as delta (Typhoons, F-35s, F-22s, Rafales, B-2s, Viggens, etc.) and these might on occasion be thought to be an unidentified triangular object (although it's worth noting that they make a heck of a lot of noise and do not turn at ninety-degree angles or fly blunt-end first).

From the 1990s onwards, British newspapers reported sightings of triangular UFOs, especially over the English Midlands, and they have come to be called the "Dudley Doritos" after one of the first midland locations in which the triangular objects were seen. In the Ministry of Defence's UFO

files, which were released to the public from 2009 onwards, is a typical example of such a sighting.

A couple from Halesowen in the midlands emailed the MoD on October 8, 2009. They were standing in their garden on October 4 at about seven-thirty in the evening watching two “orange glows” travel across the sky to the north-northeast. They told the MoD that the glows were travelling in line, quite fast. The rear one seemed to catch up with the one in front and they both turned sharply east. The crucial part of their description was:

> *As they turned it was just possible to make out their shape which appeared triangular or arrow shaped.*

These witnesses may also have given us a clue as to what some of the objects seen as parades of orange lights may be.

David Marler described four or five sightings of triangular shapes in the UK in 1995. He also recorded sightings in Romford and Walthamstowe in 1996. Witnesses to both incidents, while saying that the objects were triangular, also reported them as being orange or having orange lights. For 1997 Marler included the sighting by police in Corsham, Wiltshire of two triangular objects. In 1998 in Cheshire a witness saw two triangular UFOs apparently merge into a single object, and in June of the same year, in Cheshire, witnesses saw a triangular object hovering over a hospital in the early hours of the morning. In the latter report the witnesses said that it exhibited three white lights and that it was shining a beam down onto buildings. Marler mentions other similar incidents in the same year. For 1999 he repeats the story carried by the Belper News in Derbyshire on March 21 which told of the sighting of a triangular shaped UFO apparently flying backwards (i.e. blunt end first).

Marler also mentions an interesting event which occurred on December 26, 2000. A couple were driving home in Essex on Boxing Day night (December 26) when they saw in the sky a “silent, huge, white triangular shaped object seemingly changing its shape”. The couple saw the object twice that night and on the second occasion it “emitted five beams of light as though looking for something”[20]. And yet again the theme of beams searching for something. The latter detail is uncannily similar to the description given by the meteorologist at RAF Cosford in 1993 who saw a low flying object shooting a beam down that made it seem as if it was looking for something.

Further into the twenty-first century, sightings of wedge or triangular objects in the English midlands began to be known as “Dudley Doritos”. As far as I can tell these sightings began well before 2007 and have continued to this day – but not just in the midlands. The British BEAMS website contains two sightings of triangular shaped UFOs in 2016 and three in 2017 alone plus sightings of wedge and delta shaped objects.

Something with three red lights at the corners of a triangle and a blue/white light in the middle was seen over north Wales in February 2016. The witness watched as it travelled at fairly high speed towards the village of Four Crosses in the direction of the town of Shrewsbury just across the border with England. Another formation of such lights was seen in York in June of the same year. On January 3, 2017 a lady near Southampton videoed a fascinating set of triangular lights in the sky. The video is available on YouTube[21].

The BEAMS listings contain another triangular report from June 2017 and a report dated August 28, 2017 of a wedge-shaped object over an unknown British location. The UK-UFO website also published a sighting from Bushey in Hertfordshire on October 6, 2017 in which the witness photographed three yellow lights in a rough triangular formation and, separately, two blue lights

which were said to have moved all over the sky much faster than an aircraft.

There is clearly no lack of triangular objects being seen over the British Isles and the UK is still experiencing considerable numbers of sightings of all types of UFOs. In the thirty-four months between January 2015 and October 2017 BEAMS put up 509 “selected” reports on their website. There’s no way of knowing from the website what proportion of all received reports make it onto that “selected” list, but just taking those published reports gives an average of fifteen per month or about 180 per year. Using the 5 percent rule that would give us at least nine totally inexplicable sightings per year from the BEAMS listings alone. Looking through the BEAMS listings one has to say that the number of inexplicable sightings is likely to be more than nine per year – possibly up to double that number.

Noble, Oklahoma, 2002

I pondered for a while before accepting this example. It involves a single civilian who reported a triangular object which was apparently being chased by a USAF fighter. The sighting lasted just four minutes. But there are a couple of compelling reasons why I decided that the outsider might be very interested in it.

Firstly, the witness came across to the US UFO organisation NUFORC as being credible, and secondly, he reported a couple of very weird attributes which I have noticed being reported by other people who see similar objects. More on that in a moment.

A chap was taking his nightly walk in the small town of Noble, Oklahoma (it’s about twenty-five miles south-south-west of Oklahoma City and a little less from Tinkler USAF base which lies just outside the city (for

later reference, Tinkler lost its F-16s in the mid-90s and no other USAF base in Oklahoma flies F-16s). At about 11.30pm on May 27, 2002 the witness saw a triangular object flying over him north to south at about 20,000 feet. It was totally silent and he estimated the speed as about 500 knots (575mph). He added that, a few miles behind the object, was a fighter aircraft chasing to catch up.

Like some of the witnesses to the Washington DC UFO chases in 1952 this chap said that it seemed to him as though the object was “toying” with the fighter. It sometimes seemed to wait for the USAF plane to catch up and then set off again at speed. Once, he said, the object made a sharp right turn which the fighter was unable to replicate. It had to make a wide curving turn instead and therefore lost ground. The course of both was now west-north-west. Then suddenly the object sped away and left the jet standing. After that the fighter made a turn and then headed off to the north-northeast.

The witness reported three lights constituting the object but also volunteered two strange pieces of additional information. He said that the lights were an unusual milky-white colour which were very different to the bright red and green lights, and the bright white strobe of the fighter. This is one of those strange characteristics which I discussed in Volume 1 – the tendency for the lights on unidentified objects to be of unusual hues – sometimes extremely bright but not hurting the eyes, sometimes the colours are “pure”, sometimes described as “pastel”, or “flat” and sometimes just very strange colours like those seen by this particular gentleman. He also mentioned that the triangle was an extended one not equilateral.

The other strange characteristic mentioned by the witness was that the object appeared to be flying backwards. The expectation for most of us is that a delta-shaped object will fly point-first – like Concorde or an F-35. Man-made delta aircraft do not fly backwards but this object was reported as flying

with the pair of white lights first and the lone light at the tip of the triangle following on – blunt-end-first.

The description adds considerable credibility to the report because no-one in their right mind really tries to convince people that a delta object is flying blunt end first. Like several other common characteristics of UFOs this one tends to encourage disbelief. But it ties in with examples reported in "*Triangular UFOs: An Estimate of the Situation*" by David Marler, in which the author draws particular attention to their oft-reported non-aerodynamic shape, and their tendency, on occasion, to appear to be flying backwards – e.g. February 1967 in Woodstock; June 1972 in Buffalo; January 1978 New Jersey; and March 1999 Belper, Derbyshire, England.

Sea of Marmara, Turkey 2007-09

There are photos and videos galore around the internet and I flagged up some of the very best in the first volume. The Trent photos back in 1950 were spectacular and there have been a few of similar standard in the intervening years including the McRoberts photo from Canada. But, in the twenty-first century, most of the photos which appear online are taken with smart phones and show, all too often, lights in the sky, water drops on windows, or blurred smudges. In what is supposed to be the age of video the situation leaves agnostics highly frustrated. A few contested photos and some indistinct and jumpy videos, but very little one can get excited about or which hits us outsiders right between the eyes.

Well now all that has changed. We have a set of highly compelling videos from very recent times – the multiple shots taken in Turney between about 2007 and 2009, and the military videos released by the US Department of Defense from December 2017 onwards.

The Turkish videos were filmed at a place called Kumburgaz in Turkey

where a chap named Murat Yalcin Yalman shot a series of objects over the Sea of Marmara. At first sight one is seriously tempted to write them off as hoaxes because the videos are nothing short of astounding. The films began on June 22, 2007 with some hand-held shots and, online, there are clips extending through to some much more professional, tripod-mounted shots in 2009. Online there is also an account of the findings of Tubitak – the Ankara based Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey. Sirius, the Turkish UFO body, had the research council examine at least one of the videos. The YouTube clip of the TV studio discussion on the videos contains a Turkish sceptic arguing, not surprisingly, that the objects are just toys, but it also contains the main finding of the frame-by-frame study of the video tapes by Tubitak – that they were not mock-ups or hoaxes, and that what was on the film was an object with lights filmed under normal conditions.

The videos are, as I say, astounding and they are extremely hard for the outsider to take at face value[22]. Nevertheless, they have been validated by a number of experienced people, and the Turkish Research Council, and all say they are genuine. Among the people who have looked closely at these events is Dr Roger Leir who was there for one of the shoots and whose radio interview is also online. In that interview he mentions the fact that, at one point in the video, shapes can be seen moving inside the object.

Blocked File, 2009

This one is an amusing piece of officialdom from the UK, where officialdom generally takes itself very seriously and is never knowingly amusing. In the Ministry of Defence UFO files, now online, there is an email dated October 9, 2009. In it, a down-to-earth witness reports seeing some red/orange lights in the shape of a triangle near Southgate in north London. The lights were seen at about eleven at night on October 8. The report said

that whatever it was, was silent and that it may have had an exhaust coming from it. The witness' daughter managed to get some video film of the lights and this was evidently attached to the report and forwarded to the MoD.

The amusing bit is what followed the text of the email in the released MoD files. It was a record of a "blocked file alert". It said that "A file has been blocked due to the 'Banned Content Types' rule. The file of the video had been called 'UFO.avi' and the alert went on to say that it had been disallowed "due to filename".

Isn't that just typical of bureaucracy? The email was sent to the UFO-Desk at the MoD (it was in its last months at that time). There is nothing wrong with the file type "AVI", so it's clear that any filename with the word "UFO" in it was "Banned Content" according to the RAF/MoD. It would be great to be able to label this as part of a British government conspiracy but, given the fact that the email had itself been entitled "UFO", it's far more likely that it was down to the Civil Service's left-hand not being told what its right was doing! Consequently, the video file never reached the Ministry of Defence. One can only hope that it did not contain a UFO issuing a warning to the planet of the imminent destruction of the planet!

British Columbia, Canada 2016

On April 19, 2016, at about 10.20pm, a couple were walking their dog on White Rock beach (a few miles south of Surrey and just across the bay from US territory). They were ambling along in a roughly west-northwest direction when the lady looked up and saw a red light in the sky. It was, she said, very large and very bright. It looked at first as if it were standing still but they realised it was actually coming towards them, gradually revealing itself as a triangle of red lights. There were no other colours and no noise, and the witnesses watched civil aircraft flying below and in front of the triangular

object. They decided that the object was very large because, in comparison, a plane which flew below it was like a "grain of rice" (although they did not say how large the object looked).

The object then changed direction by ninety degrees – apparently not by turning or banking but simply by going blunt-end first in a new direction. Within thirty seconds it had shrunk to a pinpoint and then disappeared as it flew into the distance. The lady's bafflement is clear in her final words:

> *This was really hard to put into words as it was something beyond what I can describe properly. It was difficult to wrap my brain around what I was seeing/had seen.*

Exmouth, Devon, 2017

There are so many photos and videos online and so many that are of little value due to the lack of steady filming, perspective, and context that it is almost impossible to sort the sheep from the goats. The chances are that a high proportion of the photos and videos online are honest misidentifications or even hoaxes. To make things worse a huge number are just too fuzzy or too indistinct to be of any value at all even if they do show something genuinely inexplicable. And, to put the tin lid on it, a high proportion of the ones which could potentially be of real interest are not well shot. People are often so surprised by the advent of a genuine unidentified object that they grab their smart-phones and fire off burst shots or take rapid, uncoordinated video without thinking about how viewers will actually be able to get the perspective and context that they themselves have. In some ways it's quite comforting and adds to the credibility of the sightings (even if many of them are of natural phenomena). A hoaxer would generally make a much better job of it so that they could laugh at all the people taken in by their clever little

tricks.

It’s a standard complaint from the people who submit such evidence; the photo or the video does not do justice to what the witness actually saw. And that’s not surprising. Anyone who has done any professional photography or video work knows how devilishly difficult it is to get the shot you want – the one which carries the message effectively to the viewer. Professional videographers not only worry about exposure, colour, speed, depth of field, and such like, they also have to consider how to frame whatever it is and how to convey its size and movement. Wildlife work – whether still or video – is probably the nearest equivalent to trying to photograph unidentified objects. Wildlife does not work to schedules, it does not enter a scene to order, and it certainly will not repeat a scene if you miss it. And that’s the problem with unidentified things in the sky or in water; they give you only one chance. Your camera work has to be brilliant to be valuable – or you have to be extremely lucky. Many witnesses tell of the colour of their UFOs and are then frustrated that the camera has not picked it up (smart-phones are particularly poor at picking up colours at night), they explain that the object came towards them at speed and then stamp their feet when the camera, taking a head-on shot, doesn’t show it. They say that the object flashed across the sky at enormous speed and are then baffled by the fact that their panned shot shows no, or very little speed, just a jerky light in the middle of the frame. And they insist that the object or light they saw was huge but, without any man-made or natural objects in the frame, the film leaves the viewer wondering whether it was not merely a speck on the horizon.

The point is that the human eye is a truly incredible piece of machinery. It can see colour easily even in bright sunlight, it changes focus smoothly and almost instantaneously, it has the peripheral vision to be able to take in the context of a sighting, and it sees in 3D – it can estimate things like size,

distance and speed from the sparsest of clues. But cameras – even modern cameras – are nowhere near as good. They are generally 2D, the viewer of any photo or film needs clues on the film itself for them to be able to get value from them. Far too many photos and videos show lights and objects on a blue sky or a black background with no reference points, context, or perspective. Similarly, too many people simply follow the lights around, which tends to make them seem stationary, and, without something to provide perspective, this also destroys any chance of estimating speed and size.

It's not easy, even for the professionals, but the effect of all this on the current library of UFO visual evidence is to render useless more than nine out of ten films or photos. Very occasionally, though, an amateur will take shots which provide context and at least some perspective and that makes their efforts more than worthwhile. The events in Exmouth in the county of Devon in 2017 are an excellent example. An apparently triangular object and its lights was filmed by a bus driver who was waiting for the bus he was going to be driving on his shift. The event centred on a group of three lights in a triangular formation which might or might not have been a single object.

In his report the witness explained that it was about 9.40pm on the night of April 17, 2017. He was strolling around, chatting to a friend on the phone, when he noticed three lights in the sky in the direction of the river. He said that the lights appeared to be rotating on their central axis and that they were "wobbling slightly" (which tends to discount triple satellite formations if nothing else).

So, he began filming the lights on his phone. He'd been interested in UFOs since he was a child, but this was the first time he'd seen something strange and, in the video, his utter frustration is clear that it had happened when all he had was a phone to film them on. He was understandably angry and that

comes across in the two-minute, forty second video. He ran to different locations and struggled to get away from the street lights to get better shots. He took still photos and another shorter video as well.

The lights were still there when his bus turned up at just after ten. He got in and drove the vehicle to the turnaround – about ten past ten by that time – and the lights had disappeared by the time he returned to the place he'd been standing. He explained that around ten other people had seen the lights including an elderly man who'd thought he'd just drunk too much!

The compelling thing about this video is the honest (and somewhat profane) anger of the witness that he was not able to use his higher-quality camera to get these shots. These two clips are simply of lights in the sky in a rough triangular formation, but they do have some perspective – as afforded by the street lamps and other shots in which background is included. One sceptic immediately came up with the explanation that the lights were simply one or more drones, but it would have had to be either a very large drone or several being operated in close proximity in darkness – and the lights at that height would have needed to be very bright.

The video needs to be analysed closely because the movement of the lights is quite strange at times. In the meantime, we can be sure of one thing – that videos and photos of baffling objects and lights will keep coming in, and that, in all probability, between one and five percent of them will prove to be inexplicable within our current scientific understanding[23].

Cigar shape

The term "cigar" applies to anything, long or short, which is roughly sausage-shaped; that is, roughly cylindrical but with rounded ends. In the past, many were described as airships. As was possibly the case with the Aurigny sighting – described below – some could be disc shaped objects seen

from the side.

There are numerous examples, but the following seem to cover the subject comprehensively – from giant objects seen over the English Channel and over Texas to smaller, foreshortened cigars like that witnessed by the F-18 pilot Commander David Fravor.

**

Forty years on from the BOAC sighting of 1954 (see Chapter 10), pilots were still seeing strange things in the air. As we've seen with the BOAC case and with even earlier American cases like the Washington DC events in 1952, civilian pilots have been seeing cigar-shaped objects flashing around the skies, or sometimes hovering in one place for long periods of time, for almost as long as passengers have been ferried around in heavier-than-air contraptions. They've reported a lot of other shapes as well, but the cigar shape is a strong theme – sometimes with a change of shape to a disk as the object appears to swivel or turn. Outsiders are really put under the cosh where pilot sightings are concerned because we find it very difficult to deny their professional judgement, experience of things in the sky, and eyesight. We accord their reports the highest credibility and yet what they are telling us is simply in-credible. One minute they are sitting in their instrument-packed cockpits managing the minute to minute task of flying a metal tube packed with people at speeds of many hundreds of miles per hour. The next they are telling us that they've seen a huge, totally impossible object exhibiting the most amazing characteristics.

The pilots themselves are completely aware of this paradox. That's why most of them don't report such encounters. Captain Duboc of Air France, who spotted a cigar-shaped object over Paris in 1994 did not actually report it

until 1997 when he noticed a report of what was probably the same object from someone on the ground. Captain Terauchi of Japan Air Lines reported his sighting immediately and lived to regret it. Captain Bowyer of Aurigny Airlines reported it immediately and was lucky not to suffer too badly from it. That's why Dr Richard Haines set up NARCAP (*National Aviation Reporting Center on Anomalous Phenomena)* in 2000, to try to give pilots the anonymity to protect them from retribution and ridicule while still acquiring their important data.

In spite of this, brave pilots still publicly report what they see. More often than not it is because they genuinely believe that there will be a prosaic explanation and that the civil aviation authorities need to know for safety reasons. But, regardless of their motivation, they almost always suffer the ridicule of their peers, the tongue-in-cheek disdain of the media, and the cold dismissiveness of the authorities.

And there's one other thing which must be said. Not everyone is being obstructive and dismissive. Sometimes – but all too infrequently – one finds the authorities doing their best to get to the bottom of things and, on occasions, one also encounters air traffic controllers who try really hard to explain what the pilots are seeing – the Bovina case, which was discussed in the section on the size of UFOs, was just such a one. Captain Tollefson and his crew saw a very large piece of kit that had lights down the side. It was flying at around 39,000 feet so was most certainly not a drone.

And we also have some good video of such an object.

The Salida UFO, 1995

One of the most intriguing UFO videos in modern times was shot on August 26, 1995 by a chap named Tim Edwards in Salida, Colorado. Together with his daughter and wife he watched and filmed a bright, cigar-

shaped object in the sky, over the roof of their house. It was broad daylight and the object blinked in and out of existence, apparently moving large distances in the blink of an eye. The Edwards also reported that there was a much smaller ball of light which appeared to come out of, and fly around, the main one. The video shows the roof-line of a house with a cigar-shaped object sitting, fairly stationary, in the clear blue sky above it. The object was in view for around half an hour and was evidently also seen by a good many people in and around the town.

On YouTube is a stabilised version of Edwards' film which shows very clearly how the object moves position and appears to dart around in a way which no man-made aircraft could manage. The main footage and the stabilised versions also show how vital it is for witnesses to try to get earth-bound objects into the frame for context and perspective – something which Mr Edwards managed quite well.

On the full video one can clearly hear his young daughter, Brandy, asking if "spaceships can grow like that". Tim Edwards responds that the object had just moved a great distance in a matter of a second or two. There is also an interview with the family on the National Geographic site[24]. It was filmed as part of James Fox's *UFO Chasers* program (for some strange reason the film calls him "Bob" Edwards but the testimony of the family, not long before Tim Edwards died, is compelling and convincing.

The Salida video is among the best of the high-quality UFO videos. Its provenance is unquestionable, and it very clearly shows something very, very strange in the sky above Salida, Colorado back in 1995.

The Tic-Tac Affair, 2004

The sightings which come under the heading of the Tic Tac Affair involved a US Navy Commander in an F-18 watching a small, cigar-shaped

object doing incredible things. The events surrounding that sightings are complex and revealing (in more ways than one), but the incident is far more important than merely that of a single sighting, or even the multiple sightings which took place around it.

When it came fully into the public domain in 2017 the Tic Tac evidence laid the groundwork for a series of revelations and incidents which are connected by the fact that they involve the US Navy and that the evidence is of the very highest quality. This storyline deserves laying out in a more coherent manner than merely as a set of sightings – of whatever shapes – and I have therefore given them their own section later in this Chapter.

Aurigny, 2007

I make no apology for repeating this case from Volume 1. More than a decade on, it remains one of the most fascinating and credible sightings of strange objects by pilots ever reported. The bright yellow things reported by two airline pilots from separate aircraft and corroborated by passengers on the first aircraft and by at least two witnesses on the ground, were quite unusual to say the least. They fit the traditional UFO "look" in that they were huge and cigar shaped, but the colour was a little less common. Nevertheless, such a colour and shape has been seen before, not least in Chile thirty years previously. In 1978 two fighter pilots in Chilean air force Northrop F-5s reported seeing a very large object which they said was the size of "several aircraft carriers" and which looked like a "plantain banana".

If we were ever tempted to accept the argument that UFOs were things of the past, mass hysteria from the 1950s and 1960s, or figments of overactive imaginations, this event would most certainly make us think again. In one very ordinary, everyday story, it juxtaposes a set of totally independent witnesses on the one side, with two very large, bright yellow, cigar-shaped

objects on the other. The witness sightings were possibly supported by weak radar returns as well but this is not substantiated.

It's a case which baffles everyone, but it happened.

On a relatively clear, bright spring afternoon in April 2007, Aurigny Airlines' Flight 544, a Trislander,[25] was about ten or twelve miles southwest of the Isle of Wight, at its cruising altitude of four thousand feet. It had taken off from Southampton a few minutes earlier at its scheduled time of 2pm en-route for Alderney, one of the smaller of the British Channel Islands which lie off the coast of France[26]. At that point, the pilot, who had been flying this route for the previous eight years, noticed a bright yellow light in the direction of the island of Guernsey (another island in the Channel Islands' group) which lay about eighty miles distant (a little further than Alderney). Bowyer's flight was a short trip, and on a clear day, even at such a low cruising height, the pilot and passengers could easily see ahead to their destination and beyond.

Captain Ray Bowyer gazed at the light, thinking it might be a reflection onto the clouds from the ground on Guernsey, an island famed for its acres of horticultural greenhouses. He kept an eye on the bright yellow light as the plane flew on, but it did not change, either in position or in its intensity. Another factor which puzzled him was that there was a low, hazy bank of cloud below the light which should have reduced its brightness if it had been a reflection from the ground.

Within a few minutes, Bowyer realised that the light was not changing much as his angle to it changed and could not, therefore, be a reflection. So, the plane being on autopilot, he reached for his binoculars. Through them, he could see that the brilliant yellow light had a shape. From his vantage point, it looked like an elongated cigar with length-to-width ratio of about 15:1. The object had what appeared to be a dark width-wise band (that is, from the

pilot’s point of view the band ran vertically up the “side” of the object).

The Trislander droned onwards and soon, two passengers, a couple who were sitting behind Bowyer (those aircraft had no separation between the pilots and the passengers – oh, blissful days), spotted the yellow object and pointed out that there was another one just behind the first. The pilot now described the objects as discs with a dark area to the right as he looked at them. He told an audience at the National Press Club in Washington DC that he estimated their size at up to a mile across.

Ray Bowyer now wondered whether there was any air traffic coming towards him, and he contacted Jersey Air Traffic Control, telling them what he was watching. They replied in the negative as to air traffic heading towards him and added that they could just make out a faint primary radar return in the rough position indicated by Bowyer.

A second aircraft, which was then some twenty miles south of Bowyer, also told Jersey they had seen the object. Captain Patrick Patterson, the pilot of a Blue Islands’ Jetstream aircraft, inbound to Jersey from the Isle of Man, reported from above the tiny island of Sark: a different angle of view from that of Bowyer’s plane. Patterson estimated the maximum size of the object as about half a nautical mile.

At around that time, with the two objects still in sight, Bowyer had to descend into his landing pattern. The Trislander put its nose down, and as it flew through the hazy cloud layer at two thousand feet, he and his passengers lost sight of the two objects.

For the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), Bowyer filed the standard report for an unidentified aircraft in controlled airspace and without a transponder (the latter provides altitude and other information to air traffic control). Attached to the report, he enclosed a couple of drawings of the objects.

During his inspection of the first object through his binoculars, Captain Bowyer had observed quite a few details, and his summary of the implications of what he saw is sobering:

"Due to my close proximity, the dark area on the right of the nearest one now took on a different appearance at the boundary between the brilliant yellow and the dark vertical band. There appeared to be a pulsating boundary layer between the two differences in colour, some sort of interface with sparkling blues, greens, and other hues strobing up and down about once every second or so. This was fascinating, but I was now well beyond our descent point and, to be frank, I was not too displeased to be landing." ***[27]***

Two pedestrians on Sark also reported the objects in a phone call to BBC Radio Guernsey. Jersey ATC sent its radar recording to the CAA. It showed two faint objects moving slightly north and south for a period of about fifty-five minutes.

The explanation for Captain Bowyer's objects is impossible to pin down at present. A number of possible explanations were carefully examined by NARCAP in 2008.[28] The article is well worth reading as an example of the organisation's extremely detailed and careful investigation of a UFO sighting and the considered attempts to find a rational, prosaic explanation. In the case of the Channel Islands sightings, the research came up with sixteen possible hypotheses but only two moderately possible, explanations at what it terms Rating 3 (on a five-point scale of plausibility), that is, "somewhat plausible". The investigation could find absolutely no possible explanations which would be classed as "very plausible" or "definite". The first "somewhat plausible" answer was glasshouse reflections, and the second was "earthquake lights" which themselves are not well understood as a phenomenon and which have, anyway, not been shown to be able to exist for the time involved in the Aurigny sighting. Researchers have also proposed that the faint radar returns

might have been surface targets (ships) reflected from the cloud layer.

Captain Bowyer says he saw distinct colours and bands and that the objects moved relative to each other. The 2008 NARCAP study is impressive both in its detail and its balance, but in its way, it is like nineteenth-century scientists concluding that rocks that fall from the sky are beyond consideration. There is, of course, another explanation which one might place at the very plausible end of the spectrum – that what two airline captains, some passengers, and some people on the ground saw, was actually there.

Bowyer, himself, believes he witnessed something "not originating on this planet". He considers that the authorities have their hands tied to a certain extent where such sightings and reports are concerned for, he believes, if people were informed of the truth, the result could be recrimination against authority in many forms, resulting in civil unrest. His concerns reflect those of a number of other thoughtful insiders in wondering whether we should really be wanting to open Pandora's box. But, human beings being human beings, I have no doubt that, given the chance, we'll go right ahead and open it.

Stephenville, Texas, 2008

It is important for the outsider to remember, when reading the Internet Age accounts in this book, that they occurred – in the main – after all of us believed that formal government investigations of UFOs had long since ended; when sceptics were saying that the "UFO craze" was ebbing away.

The US Air Force gave up any pretence of officially recording and investigating UFOs in 1969, and the British government, although recording sightings up to 2009, apparently did nothing to investigate them (at least not openly). Both governments claim they do not need to investigate because UFOs are "of no defence significance" (as if governments only ever

investigate anything if it is of defence significance!). So, we believed, rumours notwithstanding, that the only investigation modern sightings got was unofficial enquiries by hundreds of dedicated volunteers.

We now know for sure – as of December 2017 – that this was not the case. Whether through Bigelow Aerospace or some internal agency, the US government financed (or partly financed depending on who you listen to) a five-year program called the *Advanced Aviation Threat Investigation Program (AATIP)* - see the Tic Tac Incident). But, although some absolutely mind-blowing video evidence was released, the full report on the AATIP investigation has yet to be made public – much to the dismay of Luis Elizondo and Christopher Mellon of the *To The Stars Academy*. This is the reason why many of the modern sightings are controversial; they have little in the way of corroboration or scientific examination.

In January of 2008, however, an event occurred near Stephenville, Texas which appears to have been corroborated by radar tracks and seems to have involved a chase by USAF F-16s. It also has the additional cachet of happening near the ranch owned by the Bush family (two ex-Presidents, should you have forgotten). In many accounts it is known as the “Flying Walmart” case; because one witness said the object he saw was that big. But the most important thing is that this set of sightings received a thorough investigation by MUFON. One can perhaps pick a few holes but, given the budgets, it was a pretty thorough piece of work. It is described in more detail below.

The events transpired in a region of Texas to the south-west of Fort Worth. The area in question lies roughly between the towns of Dublin and Stephenville and the excitement all kicked-off on the evening of January 8, 2008 starting at 6.00pm or a little earlier.

Witness accounts resonate with testimony from the Hudson

Valley sightings almost thirty years previously. They said the object came onto the scene at great speed and then just stopped dead and hovered in mid-air. One man said an object hovered right over him and he could see detail on the underside. Ground-based witnesses included a pilot, a police officer, and a great many others. They all claim to have seen a large, lit object which flew fast, hovered, and was silent.

Many of the witnesses said that the object, when it flew off, was pursued by USAF fighters. Apparently, the US UFO organisation MUFON managed to acquire some initial radar data from the FAA which was alleged to have shown several objects as they moved towards President Bush's Crawford Ranch. As usual, the USAF at first denied that they'd had any fighters in the area, but subsequently recanted and said the F-16s in the area were there for a training exercise. It is simply amazing the number of UFO reports containing some sort of official element such as radar plots or the involvement of fighters which are met by the authorities with first one story and then another (and sometimes yet another, as in the Phoenix Lights case).

The very detailed MUFON report was compiled by radar and electronics expert Glen Schulze and MUFON's Director of Research Robert Powell (see Schulze & Powell)[29]. It analysed radar data and other documentary evidence which showed that, far from having no planes in the air at the time of the sightings, the USAF had somehow forgotten that they'd deployed no less than ten F-16s. These fighters left Carswell AFB in two sorties of four aircraft and a third sortie of two aircraft. On the radar plots they gave every indication of being on training missions (as the USAF had eventually offered) but there were evidently some fairly unusual diversions on their return legs. MUFON also acquired seventeen witness reports, eight of which were detailed.

The radar evidence came from five different radar sites in the Dublin-

Stephenville area. Apart from the flights of F-16s from Carswell, the radar also showed what may have been an AWACS aircraft following a racetrack pattern at about 41,000 feet over the area for about four hours. AWACS planes carry advanced radar which provides early warning of enemy attacks and controls friendly aircraft. Their height means they can “see” much further than ground radars. Its presence is clearly explained – at least in part – by the F-16 exercises but one cannot help wondering what else it might have recorded.

Between about 6.00pm and 6.25pm on January 8 six witnesses reported a strange object over Stephenville and it seems that radar supported this sighting. The object was said to be bright, large, and silent. It moved fast but hovered at times. These witnesses were widely separated geographically; roughly in a semi-circle from the west of Stephenville through the southwest and southeast to the east. The locations ranged from about eight miles to twenty miles from Stephenville and included Selden, Chalk Mountain, Lake Proctor, and Gorman.

The witnesses all said that the object tracked from northeast of them, to the north and then to the northwest before becoming stationary in the west. According to the radar tracks, an unidentified object appeared on the screens at 1815.03 (6.15pm and three seconds) about seven miles north of Selden. A second object then appeared due north of Stephenville at 1815.26. MUFON estimated its speed at about 2,100 mph for the first part of this track. The Selden witnesses saw the object being “chased” by F-16s at low level. Another four witnesses saw the object near Dublin between about 6.40pm and 7.15pm and there was a final sighting at about 9.30pm near the town of Comanche (about 15 miles southwest of Dublin and 25-30 miles southwest of Stephenville).

One witness is said to have taken about fourteen minutes of video of a

large, spinning object with red, blue and green lights. But perhaps one of the most fascinating testimonies came too late to be included in the main body of the MUFON research. It was simply appended to the end and is probably all the more powerful for that. It came from a police officer who was interviewed by telephone on July 8, 2008. He stated that he had just started work and was in his patrol car in Stephenville between 7.00pm and 7.30pm when he saw a huge object hovering over the town. He estimated in was about 600 feet wide, 40 feet deep, and was no more than 300 feet in the air. He used the building and streets of the town to estimate dimensions and height.

The interesting thing is that the officer said that the object had “towers” on it – both above and below – that were between fifty and one hundred feet high with flashing lights on them. The body of the object carried two larger lights which were steady. At first reading this sounds somewhat unbelievable – an object with towers? However, we might need to take into account the Albany object, filmed in 2002, which was said to have rods or towers sticking out of it. One would like to know how these Stephenville towers were distributed in order to evaluate them a little more effectively.

And there’s more! The officer followed the object in his car as it moved slowly across the town and he watched its departure. Outsiders who have read Volume 1 will know that one of the weirder characteristics of UFOs, as reported by many witnesses, is their tendency to hover at an angle or even stand entirely on end. That’s exactly what this officer saw. He watched as the object slowly tilted to forty-five degrees and then stood on end, a full ninety degrees from its “hovering” position. It did this, the witness said, not by rotating on its central axis as one would expect (indeed, as all aircraft do) but by pivoting on its end like a trap-door. At this point the patrolman saw the strobe lights extinguish and a third large light come on between the other two

on the body. The object then moved slowly off into the distance and was lost to the officer's view.

This particular testimony is extremely compelling. Not only did it come from a serving police officer, but it describes characteristics of the object which a fraudster would have never claimed. Any trickster would have more than hesitated to say things like "it pivoted from its end", "it had towers on it", and "the lights went off and on in different sequences". A huge cigar shaped object hovering over the Court House is good stuff, and a few coloured and flashing lights make it a great sighting. So, if it was a lie, why add the virtually unbelievable extra detail?

I can hear the sceptics screaming "double bluff" but that's too clever by half. A serving police officer takes massive risks by even so much as reporting something strange in the air. I refuse to believe that they would compound the risk of ridicule by adding unbelievable extra detail. A true fraudster would probably have added "alien creatures" visible inside, or strange noises, and a spectacular departure in the form of a blaze of light shooting up into the sky at incredible speed. But this witness merely said it flew slowly off until he lost sight of it behind some trees and buildings. No. I think even the most sceptical of outsider would have to admit there's a strong sense of truth about this officer's testimony.

Even so, the "Stephenville Incident" would have been nothing more than a sheaf of oral testimony from local residents (no matter how professional and senior those witnesses were) without the work of Glen Schulze and Robert Powell in tracking down radar evidence. Their report is well worth careful reading. Not simply because it describes this particular mass sighting very well but because it shows how much supporting evidence can be unearthed with patient digging and how that evidence can turn an oral folk-story into a powerful, evidence-based narrative.

Unlike the Hudson Valley case, which was forced (apparently by official fiat) to rely almost entirely on civilian witness testimony, the Stephenville narrative rests on some pretty impressive foundations. Numbers of unconnected witnesses including a police chief, a pilot, and an air traffic controller – in different locations – saw a brightly lit object of between 500 feet and 1,000 feet in size hovering and then moving very rapidly across the Texas skies. In one case, as we've seen, a police officer watched the object for minutes as it glided over the town, changed its lights, pivoted on its end and then slowly glided away again – all in complete silence. And if you should feel that all those independent witnesses can be discounted because "anyone can make a mistake" you would then have to explain why no less than five separate radar stations tracked unidentified objects over the same area most of which tied in with what the witnesses had reported. This event did not last for seconds or minutes – it went on for more than three hours.

Yet the US military did not seem overly concerned. Although there were reports of F-16s "chasing" objects in the sky, the radar plots showed no sustained or coordinated attempt to follow or intercept the unidentified objects. The President of the United States was, at that very time, staying nearby at his Crawford Ranch and, towards the end of the radar sightings at least one object tracked off directly towards the ranch. Given the background of 9/11 the outsider would be forgiven a quizzically raised eyebrow. One can imagine a fictitious conversation between one of the radar operators and his boss that night.

Operator: "Ah, boss? You know those unidentified blips that have been tracking around all night?"

With a grunt of acknowledgement, the boss shuffles across the radar room to stand behind the operator.

Operator: "I've been watching them all evening but this one is now

tracking south west!"

Boss: "Yeh, so what? It's well off the Dallas-Fort Worth air lanes."

Operator: "But it's heading directly towards the Western White House, sir, and the President is in occupation at this very moment. I just got a terrible flashback to 9/11."

Boss: (chews his gum a while, pondering the screen) "Nah. Let it go."

Operator: "But shouldn't I get the fly-boys who are up there right now to take a look at it just in case?"

Boss: "Nope. No point. It's just an anaprop[30]."

Operator: "With respect, sir. It's not an anaprop. I've been watching it for the past two hours and it's definitely not weather or such like."

Boss: "Well, whatever. I don't want to put those nice flyboys to any trouble. Just let that unidentified blip keep right on tracking towards President Bush's ranch. It's not a terrorist attack and anyway people will understand if it turns out to be one."

The operator glances up at his boss to see whether he's joking. He's not.

He smothers a sigh and turns back to his screen, on which the UFO is getting steadily closer to where, at that very moment, President Bush is sitting down to a pleasant dinner. He's not too sure the President's family will "understand" if this turns out to be a terrorist aircraft about to crash on the Western White House but what can you do?

Amusing but surely something similar must have happened in one of those radar rooms? These tracks are not my invention – they actually happened, and you can see stills of them online (see the very good MUFON Report referenced earlier). The operators that evening had a totally unidentified track, with no transponder, headed for the President's place and, apparently, no-one lifted a finger to do anything about it. To be fair that's inconceivable.

Somehow those radar controllers either knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that the blip was not a threat, or they did do something about it.

Thomas Cook, 2013

This was yet another strange event which became the subject of a detailed UK Airprox investigation (Airprox Report 2013086) and was also reported in the British *Daily Telegraph* in early 2014. It all related to a near miss between an A320 (registration G-KKAZ) and an unknown object[31]. The aircraft was a travel-company jet flying holiday-makers and party fiends back from the Mediterranean island of Ibiza to Manchester. At 7.35 p.m.[32] on July 19, 2013 they were almost there, soon to be reunited with homes, pets, and jobs, when, at 34,000 feet heading north, an "object" passed them. The First Officer was writing up a log but the Captain (who was not named) was looking out of the left-hand cockpit window. He just had time to notice an object and duck.

He reported that the object was headed directly for the aircraft. It approached from the left side cockpit window and he believed his number was up. He had no time to take evasive action and, convinced that it was going to hit them, instinctively ducked. He said he wanted to warn the First Officer but had no time. He was absolutely certain that he was going to be killed in a high-speed, mid-air collision.

The object, he said, was shaped like a cigar or elongated rugby-ball, it was silver, and his impression was that it was metallic (where have we heard such descriptions before?). Needless to say, the object did not hit them and, when he looked up again, it was gone. He said it must have missed them by feet but there was no turbulence. The co-pilot did not see it.

The UK Airprox Board investigated the incident thoroughly but could find no other aircraft in the close vicinity. The sun was above the aircraft and

roughly at ninety degrees off its left-hand side (at nine o'clock). The nearest aircraft was 23 nautical miles away at ten o'clock (a 737 at 37,000 feet coming roughly towards the A320's position). Two other airliners were 28nm ahead and 38nm to the left.

The radar plot for 1835:22 (the time of the reported sighting) does, however, show an "unknown" at the aircraft's ten o'clock position – roughly two miles away. This was identified as a Tiger Moth (a 1930s open-cockpit biplane) operating at low level, but was shown in the filtered radar display because it was an unknown at that stage. Meteorological balloons were checked but none had been launched that day. Checks were also made with military radars which also turned up nothing.

The investigators discounted toy balloons and civilian drones due to the height at which the incident occurred. There was no military drone activity. That would have been totally prohibited in a civil air corridor and anyway all military drones capable of operating at that altitude have wings. The only half-way plausible explanation was that the pilot had mistaken glinting sunlight off other aircraft for an object about to collide with his aircraft. Certainly, an illusion cannot be ruled out but a glint from a shiny aircraft does not give the impression of being cigar-shaped, metallic and hurtling towards you. Human 3D vision is pretty good at estimating the danger inherent in a rapidly growing object and also at assessing whether its course is safely away or directly towards the viewer. If you doubt it, just imagine the maths and visual acuity required to catch a fast-moving ball in a game of baseball or cricket. The brain must spot the object, assess its course and trajectory, and then constantly calculate its speed as it approaches before putting a hand into the exact position necessary to catch it at precisely the right moment. It's an incredible skill but humans do it all the time.

The hitter whacks a really fast ball and starts running. From the stands one

cannot even see the flight of the ball, but the second base has spotted it, estimated its speed and direction, and catches it neatly with his outstretched glove. An even more astounding feat is often performed by a fielder called a "slip" in cricket. The bowler unleashes a fast ball. It swings through the air at around 90mph and the batsman, because of the curve in the flight of the ball, makes the tiniest of errors in estimation. Rather than hitting it squarely with the flat of his bat, he catches it on the edge. The ball skips off at even greater speed only to be caught by the naked hands of the second slip, who is standing a little to the batsman's side and rear. Both feats illustrate just how good some humans can be at judging approach angles and speeds in split seconds. We don't know whether the captain of the A320 was a cricketer, but his reflexes and visual power must necessarily have been top notch.

The Airprox final report concluded that it had not been possible to trace the object or to determine the likely cause of the sighting.

> *After some discussion it was decided that, although the reflection theory held some merit, the overall dearth of information relating to the event rendered a meaningful finding impossible."* ***[33]***

Another intriguing, cigar-shaped, fast-moving, silver "unknown" for which there appeared to be no explanation within our current understanding.

USN F/A-18, 2015/2018

Sightings of cigar-shaped UFOs by US Navy aircraft have become somewhat familiar in recent times and, as these form an integral part of the "US Navy Story" I have discussed them in the final section of this Chapter. But many of them have been cigar-shaped.

Cylindrical

I pondered long and hard as to whether to include this type as a separate shape or to combine it with “cigar-shapes”. A cylinder implies flat ends and some of the witness testimony supports this appearance. Other people describe a cylinder but do not explicitly mention the shape of the ends – so some of these could be cigar-shaped. However, there are clear accounts of pure cylinders – for example the description given by the British bomber crew during World War Two when the pilot said it looked like a king-sized cigarette. Where professional aviators are concerned we would be pretty silly not to accept their accounts at face value. If they say the object was cylindrical and not cigar-shaped then the strong likelihood is that there is yet another shape of UFO in our skies.

World War Two

One such sighting occurred on the night of May 26–27, 1943, during an RAF raid on Essen. The captain of an RAF Halifax bomber, Flight Sergeant Cockcroft, together with most of his crew, saw a large object to one side of them, which Cockcroft described as being tubular: the shape of a “king-size cigarette”. Another was reported by Timothy Good. It occurred in August 1944 when a Lancaster bomber of No. 7 Squadron was returning from a night raid on the oil port and submarine base of La Pallice near La Rochelle in France. They were still over France and were watching avidly for signs of German night-fighters when the aircraft’s radar screen went blank. Almost at that same moment the Captain saw something very strange on their right-hand side. He and other crew saw lights stretched in a long line fore and aft of their plane. The radar operator, Ronald Claridge, watched in awe as a disc-like object became apparent as part of the lights. He said the object was huge and that it shot away in less than a second after about three minutes alongside

the British aircraft. Claridge said that it was silent and left no turbulence. He also said that the event left him feeling no fear and very calm. He noted that the aircraft's air-gunners did not open fire[34].

That one was reported as a disc but cylinders have been reported as both very large and as small as modern missiles (in fact one or two have been said by sceptics to be exactly that). But here are a few examples.

Lufthansa, 1995

Forty years after the BOAC incident of 1954 (see Chapter 14) another four-engined aircraft was making its way to Europe from America. This time it was a much larger vehicle – capable of carrying 350 people in air-conditioned comfort, without refuelling, and at almost double the speed of that early Stratocruiser. The concept, itself, would not have amazed those 1954 passengers but the levels of comfort, the speed, and the smoothness of the flight most certainly would.

It was a cold and dark November night (November 18, 1995) at about ten twenty when flight 405, a Lufthansa Airbus A340, was climbing out of JFK over Long Island at the start of its great circle route to Frankfurt. Suddenly the flight crew saw a long cylindrical object pass, fast, to their left about three thousand feet above them. The object was dark with a white light on the front and a comet-like "tail" which glowed green. They reported it to Boston control asking what the traffic was and saying it would probably be about ten miles behind them by now. Boston responded that their radars showed no traffic within twenty or thirty miles of the Lufthansa aircraft.

So far so good you might be saying. Pretty much the same situation as with many other accounts of unidentified objects from pilots. But this case was different because suddenly a British Airways 747 came into the conversation. Speedbird 226, was approaching New York from the other direction at the

end of a flight from London.

"Speed Bird 226 confirms that. It was just above us on our left-hand side about 3 minutes ago … two, well...about one to two thousand feet above on the left-hand side. Uh, looked like a green trail on it, and a very bright light on the front of it. We assumed it was an opposite traffic."

The controller queried the altitude of the object and the Lufthansa crew said that they were currently passing 26,000 feet and that it must have been 2,000 or 3,000 feet above them. Both pilots confirmed to Boston that they did not think it was a meteorite.

This is an interesting case because two different aircrews saw what was apparently exactly the same thing: a cylindrical object with a very bright white light on the front and a green, glowing comet-like tail. The object sounds quite similar to that seen in almost the same area two years later by Captain Bobet in his Swissair 747 (see next example). What, however, I do not quite understand is why the two aircraft, flying in opposite directions saw an almost identical object following an opposite track to themselves.

The Lufthansa aircraft was leaving New York and heading roughly east-northeast. The BA 747 was approaching New York and was about thirty miles directly ahead of the Airbus presumably flying south-southwest. And yet both pilots said the object passed them on the *opposite track* and to their left at roughly the same height. We do not have any data on what the exact headings of the two aircraft were at that precise time – we only know that flight 405 was roughly 26 miles east of the VORTAC beacon HTO (Hotel Tango Oscar)[35] and that flight 226 was about 30 to 40 miles directly ahead of them (at their 12 o'clock). My question, therefore, is … if they were headed in opposite directions – one north east and the other south west – there must have been two identical objects for those objects to have passed both aircraft on opposite tracks.

The only other explanation would be that there was a single object and that the BA pilots saw it as it passed them on the same track, and that the BA pilot in his communication meant: *"We assumed it was the opposite traffic just reported by Lufthansa flight 405."* Probably too late to ever know now.

I'll leave you with that thought.

Swissair, 1997

Although originally scheduled for Volume 1, this sighting deserves being aired in the more modern context of this book. In particular, it resonates with the BOAC sighting of 1954 and the Lufthansa/BA sightings of 1995 (described above).

For the researcher, the similarity of different UFO events over time and geography is extremely striking and this is something that applies to more than merely the shapes or characteristics of the objects sighted. It also applies to the official reactions to them and the reactions of those reporting them. It's no wonder that pilots, especially commercial airline pilots, shy away from reporting encounters with strange objects. The regular trotting out of the "weather balloon" explanation has raised the ire of scores of pilots. In the United States, the weather balloon explanation is still wheeled out regularly. One could, perhaps, understand this if the witnesses were inexperienced civilians, but very, very few pilots would be fooled by such an object. If one can accept for the moment that an experienced airline pilot knows his or her onions, then it's not surprising they get a little vexed by ground-based administrators deciding that what they actually saw was a weather balloon when the pilots know perfectly well it was not.

Captain Bobet of Swissair was just such a highly experienced pilot. Not only did he fly heavy passenger jets for the Swiss national carrier but, as was the case for all Swissair pilots, he served for several weeks a year as a pilot in

the Swiss Air Force. In Bobet's case he flew Lear jets on transport flights. As a serving military reserve pilot he also knew many colleagues who flew advanced fighter aircraft and, after this event, he used those contacts to cross-check and confirm his own conclusions.

In August 1997, Bobet was command-pilot for Flight 127, a Swissair Boeing 747, on its way from Philadelphia to Boston on the first leg of a flight to Switzerland. It was 5.07pm on a clear summer's afternoon. The co-pilot was in command of the aircraft and Bobet had just finished giving his passengers a short talk about the city of New York which they could see below as they were passing. The aircraft was at 23,000 feet, almost over Long Island, and headed north-east towards Boston's Logan airport. In fact, it was following almost the same track as that taken forty years before it by the BOAC Boeing 377 Stratocruiser.

The two pilots of a passenger jet rarely look out of the cockpit window at the same time except for take-off and landing. In cruise mode one pilot is generally working with the instruments, completing logs, or planning ahead, while the other is "in command"; either flying or monitoring the flight and scanning the skies around them. Coincidentally then, both pilots happened to be looking straight ahead when an object appeared and was gone in a single second.

The flight crew had no time to do anything except duck, when a very bright white object flashed over their aircraft from ahead. The angles at which the two pilots saw it were slightly different, but they agreed that it crossed between the cockpit and the number three engine – that is roughly over the right-hand inner engine. They also agreed that it was incredibly close to their plane and flying in the opposite direction. Captain Bobet regarded it as a possible safety threat and immediately reported it as a cylindrical object of small cross section. The co-pilot, from his position nearer the line of flight,

said it appeared to him as a white ball shooting over his head. There was also agreement between the two men that the object, whatever it was, had no wings, fins or tail-planes. According to an FAA memo, Philip Bobet said that "*if the object was any lower, it may have hit the right wing*." Captain Bobet (15,000 hours of flight time) communicated with the Boston controller. The key segment went as follows:

747: Yes sir. l don't know what it was, but it just over-flew just like a couple of hundred feet above us. I don't know if it was a rocket or whatever. But incredibly fast. Opposite direction.

ATC: In the opposite direction?

The pilot then confirmed that the object was too fast to be a balloon or an aeroplane. Evidently the controller then asked other aircraft whether they had seen anything and received negative responses. He asked Captain Bobet again how far above his aircraft the object had been. The Captain replied that it went right over them between two and four hundred feet above. It was a white object and was "very fast".

NICAP reports that it was a very unusual and high-powered group which met the crew when they landed at Boston for refuelling. It consisted of someone from the Boston FAA Flight Standards office, a person from the FAA Civil Aviation Security office, a representative from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), and someone from the FBI. The NICAP researchers put this down to official sensitivity about the persistent rumours in the area, and in the aviation sector as a whole, about the fate of TWA Flight 800 only a year earlier – in July 1996. All 230 people aboard Flight 800 died when the aircraft exploded twelve minutes after take-off from JFK. It took four years and one of the most expensive accident investigations of all time for the NTSB to rule that Flight 800 probably exploded due to a short-circuit in the central fuel tank. In 2013, under pressure from interested

groups, they reconsidered the verdict and decided once-again that this was the most likely cause. However, back in 1997 the rumours were still fresh that the cause had been an accidental missile firing (and many people still believe so).

The two pilots of Swissair Flight 127 were interviewed by this august group and an FAA report was filed (NYC97SA193). It said that the pilot had stated that there was no noise or turbulence as the object passed overhead (which there almost certainly would have been if it had been a missile) and that there was no disruption to their instruments or radios.

In the end the FAA decided that the Swissair Captain and co-pilot had seen a weather balloon, a conclusion which caused a great deal of entirely understandable anger. Both pilots were very familiar with such balloons. They are usually red-black or shades of brown or tan and, as Captain Bobet later said, would have been far larger at that altitude than the cross-section of the object they saw. Also, of course, a balloon would have passed over them at a speed only slight faster than that of the aircraft itself. Both pilots, however, insisted that, whatever the object was, it was moving incredibly fast. And weather balloons are not “brilliant white”.

Research later showed that there could not have been such a balloon in that place at that time of day. Investigations found out that weather balloons in an area roughly 40 miles distant were launched at 7am and at 7pm each day. The flights of weather balloons last about an hour before they reach around 100,000 feet and burst. At 23,000 feet they would have been about five metres in diameter (sixteen or seventeen feet), much larger than the cross-section noted by the two pilots. The cross section of a weather balloon at that altitude would have been only about three feet or so less than the width of the 747’s cabin. No captain in his right mind would report that as a “small cross section”. In addition, a weather balloon near Flight 127 would have been

noted by the many other commercial flights in the vicinity, all of which had been questioned by air traffic control at the time.

A fair number of aviation reports of unidentified objects concern cylindrical objects which appear from ahead on a roughly opposing track and miss the aircraft by relatively small distances; small enough to cause the crews to report serious air miss events. For example, this happened in England on August 13, 2005. On that occasion an Air France aircraft, just to the west of Gatwick airport, reported a bright yellow, cylindrical object between one and two metres in length. They specifically said that it was not a balloon. Such incidents have also been reported from Australia (see the Perth report below).

No-one knows what Captain Philip Bobet and his co-pilot saw that day, but it was certainly a small UFO. Its speed, the brilliant white of its exterior, the lack of a missile trail, and the lack of turbulence from its passage make it a pretty strange aerial object. From the safety of their office desks the FAA said that it was a weather balloon. There is some circumstantial evidence that the NTSB later admitted that it could not have been that, but that they did not know what it was[36].

Debonair, 1999

There are two problems with the “Debonair” incident. The first is that it is not terribly well corroborated, and the second is that the only real evidence which is in the public domain is from two separate newspaper articles published at around the same time: one in the *Daily Express* and the other in the *Daily Mirror* which both reported the event in editions published in April of 1999. How they got to know about the affair is not at all clear. Normally I’d have not bothered to include it but there is a CAA Mandatory Occurrence Report in existence somewhere – although, for some reason, it does not seem

to be available – and even the *Daily Express* and the *Daily Mirror* would not print the same story without there being some "evidence" for it. Individually it might be a different matter but there was enough to this strange case to excite them both.

The case also illustrates one of the key differences between the USA and the UK where UFOs are concerned. UFO enthusiasts would argue that the UK is much better at covering up UFO events than the Americans. Look into any number of alleged British UFO cases and the evidence is almost always far less extensive than for a comparable case in the US. Official organisations such as the CAA (equivalent to the FAA), and UK government departments seem to be more effective at burying case data. There are also far fewer detailed and corroborated military cases – even on a proportional basis. A certain amount of anecdotal evidence exists that RAF pilots and crews encounter UFOs on a regular basis, but the British Ministry of Defence has never allowed any of the gun-camera or sensor data to be released. Neither does it seem likely that the MoD would allow one of its senior pilots to give public interviews on the subject as the US DoD did for Commander Fravor. Notwithstanding all this, the Debonair case provides some interesting food for thought.

It was February 3, 1999. A BAe 146 four engine airliner was heading for England at 28,000 feet over the North Sea. It was then about 58 miles off the coast of Denmark having departed Linkoping in Sweden for Humberside Airport in the UK. The aircraft was owned and operated by a charter airline called Debonair[37].

In the cockpit of the 146 at that stage of the flight, the crew became aware that there was a very bright light – an incandescent glow – illuminating the bottom of the aircraft. The BAe 146 is a high wing design and the crew would, therefore, easily have perceived the glow on the underside of the

wings and engines. This lasted for about ten seconds. The crew testified that it could not have been lights from another aircraft because it was far too bright.

According to the newspaper reports, the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) reported that three other pilots saw an object moving fast or staying perfectly still in the air. The crew of the 146 saw it move ahead as a large, long, cylindrical object (somewhat similar to the sighting of such an object by the World War Two bomber crew mentioned earlier). The crew of the 1999 airliner said it could stand still and then move rapidly. The British *Daily Express* reported that "a CAA source" had told them that the object had been tracked by British military radar and possibly RAF aircraft as it entered UK airspace (the latter is, of course, unconfirmed).

On landing, the Debonair pilot submitted a "Mandatory Occurrence Report" to the CAA but, strangely, although reported in the press, there is no sign of this in the archives. Nevertheless, it's an interesting case which was reported through official channels and which the newspapers picked-up, but which suffers from a lack of real detail and evidence. Essentially this is a newspaper story with no corroboration, but a fascinating one for all that.

Glasgow, 2012

This incident occurred on December 2, 2012, and the Airprox investigation came to no conclusion other than it was a "sighting report" – which is officialese for "haven't got a clue" (UK Airprox Report No. 2012166).

At about ten to one in the afternoon an A320 with 200 passengers on board was headed for Glasgow Airport via what is called the LANAK VOR (to the south-west of Glasgow). The pilot had been given permission to descend to 3,500 feet but was then at about 5,000. Five minutes later (1255:20) a shocked captain called Glasgow ATC and the following conversation ensued

(C/S stands for “call-sign” which we are not given):

A320: *Glasgow Approach [A320 C/S]*

Glasgow Approach (GA): *[A320 C/S] pass your message*

A320: *Er yeah we just had something pass underneath us quite close [1255:30] and nothing on TCAS [collision avoidance system] have you got anything on in our area*

GA: *Er negative, er we’ve got nothing on er radar and we’re n-not talking to any traffic either*

A320: *not quite sure what it was but it definitely [was] quite large [1255:40] and it’s blue and yellow*

GA: *OK that’s understood er do you have an estimate for the height*

A320: *Maybe er [1255:50], yeah we were probably about four hundred to five hundred feet above it so it’s probably about three and a half thousand feet.*

At about thirty-five hundred feet altitude one or both of the pilots suddenly saw a largish object “loom up” and pass about 300 feet beneath their aircraft. They said it was blue and yellow or possibly silver, had a small frontal area, and was bigger than a balloon, but they had no chance to get further details.

The UK Airprox investigation could find no explanation. Their research covered other aircraft, including microlights, hang-gliders, and passenger-carrying balloons but, as these were “radar significant” (i.e. would be seen by the radar services) they were discounted. The report mentions that an unidentified return was plotted twenty-eight seconds prior to the plane’s report and about 1.3 nautical miles (nm) east of the aircraft’s track. The unidentified return was travelling slower than the A320 but in the same direction.

The investigation considered all sorts of possible explanations but effectively discounted them. However, what is perhaps worth noting by the outsider is the close similarity in descriptions between this incident and those in 1995 and 1997 over Long Island.

Perth, Australia, 2014

Another very interesting near-miss occurred at 9.30am (Western Standard Time) on March 19, 2014, about 14 miles (23 km) north-northeast of Perth, Western Australia. At about thirty-eight hundred feet on the approach to Perth Airport, a DHC-8 aircraft (registered VH-XFX) carrying fifty-three passengers from Kambalda encountered a dark-green, cylindrical object which passed at speed about a hundred feet below the aircraft.

The pilots saw a white flashing light (they thought it was a strobe at first) coming directly for the aircraft. The pilot took evasive action by turning towards the west. The object passed them about a hundred feet below and only seventy feet to the side, which was why the Australian Transport Safety Board (ATSB) classified it as a serious incident. The pilot saw it as a grey cylindrical shape.

The ATSB investigated the event (case AO-2014-052) but was unable to explain it, even after researching all possible unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) and all other possibilities both civil and military. Two NARCAP investigators interviewed the captain (with permission from the airline) and concluded that the object was not a weather balloon and that it was not floating or hovering but travelling in the opposite direction to the aircraft.[38] Both pilots were shocked by the event.

What is it with these objects? Why scare the living daylights out of aircrew by flying directly at their aircraft and missing them by a few hundred feet or less? Do we have UFOs playing practical jokes? One can almost hear the

loud guffaws as the UFO's crew roll around their cockpit, holding their sides and slapping each other on the back at the way their close pass has made some puny humans duck with fright!

Sphere

Reports of globes or spheres are common but there is usually some doubt as the whether they may be disc-shaped craft seen in plan form or genuine spheres. Sometimes they are reported as "Saturn-shapes" – that is a sphere with a flattened central disc surrounding it. Some are just bright lights which look like spheres but no-one can tell.

The shape also encompasses smaller globes which we will discuss under "lights". People who have seen these small, sometimes basketball-sized spheres say they can be of different colours – red, green, blue – but that they often affect the mood of the observer, making them very happy, very sad, or sometimes imbued with unnerving fear.

One of the most spectacular and compelling sightings of unidentified spheres occurred in December 1978 near a place called Kaikoura in the north of New Zealand's south island. The crew of a cargo plane – an old four engine Argosy – saw lights which they could make out were part of a large object. The object had five white lights along its side. The object and smaller ones were evidently seen by radar operators at Wellington. Nine days later an Australian TV crew, who were doing a show about the sighting, encountered similar lights. They were seen by five people on board their aircraft, recorded by Wellington radar, and filmed by the TV crew in colour. The aircraft landed for fuel and then took off again for the New Zealand town of Blenheim. On this second flight the TV crew encountered a large sphere which tracked their aircraft for many minutes. They filmed it and the recordings are available online[39].

The New Zealand Ministry of Defence said the whole group of sightings could be put down to: lights from squid boats reflected off clouds, unburnt meteors, lights from the planet Venus, lights from trains and road vehicles. I'm sure no-one would swallow all that nonsense.

The New Zealand UFO organisation, UFOCUS, said:

And yet, despite these supposed somewhat mundane and harmless causes, the results of official investigations were stamped 'Top Secret' and lodged in the National Archives in Wellington!

The expert optical physicist Bruce Maccabee examined the case in great detail. His reports make sobering reading[40].

Perhaps one of the greatest problems with UFO evidence is that there is simply too much of it for us to be able to analyse it all – and yet it certainly needs serious analysis. The Kaikoura Lights, as they are known, are just one of hundreds of very convincing cases each of which comes with detailed evidence stretching back to the 1940s. Authors do their best – in relatively short books – to do justice to all this evidence but there is a pressing need for it all to be taken much more seriously and for some real resources to be thrown at the issue on a global basis.

But, back to the question of spherical UFOs. There are two examples – aprt from Kaikoura, which deserve relating. The first example seems fairly straightforward at first, but the ending would also place it firmly in the "disappearing UFO" category.

Andrew Danziger, 1989

This case is fascinating in itself but is also interesting because the pilot concerned – a chap named Andrew Danziger – is a bit of a character and also

flew Barak Obama on election night 2008.

Back in May of 1989 he was first officer on a commuter flight from Kansas City to Waterloo, Iowa. The plane was at 15,000 feet when, through the clouds to the right of the aircraft, Danziger saw a white, disc-like light. The captain of the aircraft also saw the object and the two men discussed what it could be. They considered, but ruled out, a searchlight shining from under the cloud layer, the Moon somehow being reflected from the cloud, and another air vehicle such as an approaching aircraft with its landing lights on, or a fire balloon. After that they had to return to managing the aircraft, but they kept an eye on the light nevertheless.

About twenty minutes went by and Danziger became aware that the white light had been replaced by a glowing red sphere which was now above the cloud layer and tracking their plane on a parallel course. At that point his aircraft was ordered to begin its descent and they let down to 13,000 feet. The red ball also descended and, as it did so, it disappeared behind a cloud.

Now, if you think the incident so far is pretty strange, just wait for what came next. The pilots watched as there was a burst of multi-coloured light from within the cloud and the lights, object and cloud got thinner and thinner before disappearing. Danziger said it looked like “silly putty” being stretched apart.

Needless to say, they asked their air traffic controller whether there was anything on radar but there wasn’t. Instead the controller asked them, as cool as you like, whether they wanted to report a UFO. He gave them a number for NUFORC (so US air traffic controllers in those days had the NUFORC number on their desks just in case?). Andrew Danziger is a persuasive and fascinating chap. He is one who firmly believes that, in 1996, TWA Flight 800 did not suffer from a fuel tank explosion but was accidentally shot down, and he says that many pilots have seen UFOs but do not report them or talk

about them for fear of ridicule.

Castle Rock, 2012

The town of Castle Rock lies in forest country to the south of Seattle in Washington State. On November 10, 2012 a retired airline pilot with seventeen years' experience was driving south towards his home about three miles east of Castle Rock. The night was cloudless and clear. At six twenty-eight (PST) he spotted three reddish-orange spheres hovering about 500 feet up and at his eleven o'clock.

They hovered in the shape of an equilateral triangle at first, and each sphere, he said, looked to be about that of a dime held at arm's length. The distance was about three hundred yards. They were so close to the ground that he feared that they might block the road. These totally silent objects did not flash, rotate or change colour during the whole episode.

As he turned his car east towards his home the three spheres began to manoeuvre independently of each other over roughly the same location. He watched as they manoeuvred into a straight line, each of them equally spaced, before they began a vertical climb until they had all disappeared into the high night sky. This observation may have some similarities to the Bristol, 2009 case discussed in Chapter 14. The witness called the local Sheriff but apparently no-one else had reported anything. The ex-airline pilot went on to say:

> *The objects I observed tonight were NOT aircraft navigation lights, emergency lights, landing lights, helicopters, lighter-than-air craft, weather balloons, flares, Chinese lanterns, meteorological phenomena, satellites, swamp gas, or any other nonsense … These were real, solid objects and appeared to maneuver under intelligent control. I'm still*

shaking from what I saw more than an hour and a half ago.

He was most definitely a man after my own heart.

Chapter 8

Lights and Beams

I see it, too … It's back again … It's coming this way … There's no doubt about it … This is weird … It looks like an eye winking at you … It almost burns your eyes … He's coming toward us now … Now we're observing what appears to be a beam coming down to the ground … one object still hovering over Woodbridge base … beaming down.

Lt Col Charles Halt, Rendlesham Forest, 1980

A high proportion of UFOs are reported as lights – bright lights in the sky which flit from place to place, carry out ninety degree turns and sometimes appear to merge with other lights or, from apparently triangular or cylindrical shapes, separate into different lights shooting off in different directions. The scientists of Project Hessdalen in Norway have been photographing and videoing such lights since the early 1980s. The lights can be of different colours and can be seen either as single lights or in groups, in processions of identical lights, or even as swarms of them (see the 2008 incident involving a police helicopter in Birmingham, England).

It's very tempting to conclude that any light – however far away and high in the sky is a solid object showing a bright light, a conclusion supported by witnesses who report that they have seen an object "behind the light". Some say that they see a "structure" behind the lights (for example a few witnesses during the Hudson Valley sightings). But certain lights are reported as just

lights – e.g. foo-fighters and a great many modern reports of orange lights speeding through the skies in groups of up to twenty, and the reports of small illuminated globes. This category would include the blue globes seen on the Skinwalker Ranch in the 1990s. Certain apparently-solid objects may also show lights – sometimes several lights which can be steady or can flash. The whole UFO subject hinges on lights!

We're talking about *visible* light of course, which forms a mere fraction of the electromagnetic spectrum. Some of the cylindrical UFOs that we discussed in the previous Chapter carry a white light on the front. That is clearly not for safety purposes. They travel so fast that any aircraft would not be able to take avoiding action on the basis of seeing the white light. So why the lights? At the other end of the scale some UFOs carry such an abundance of lights of different colours that they could easily exhibit themselves at a Christmas fair.

The lights are rarely constant. They change colour, they strobe, they flash, they flash in sequence, they glow, they pulsate, they fade, and they brighten, they are switched on and they are switched off. Some are large lights and others are small. In many cases the colours of the lights have been described as "pure" or "flat", or "restricted" or confined, like no similar colour the witness has seen. The witness to the main event at Exeter, New Hampshire in 1965 – Norman Muscarello – said that the first thing he noticed was a set of sequentially-flashing lights at about a sixty-degree angle. The fishermen at Shag Harbour in 1967 reported exactly the same thing about the object which descended into the sea. The variety of activity and diversity in UFO lighting makes a Son et Lumiere look boring.

So, the question stands: Why all the lights?

It's perhaps one of the most important questions about UFOs – along with why are they silent and how can they defy gravity and inertia. Are the lights

intended to attract attention? Are they related somehow to the way in which UFOs move? Are they a communication device as postulated by the film *Close Encounters*?

Who can tell? But logic would seem to reject the idea that they are for safety or to attract attention (although they certainly succeed in that). Could they be a communications device? Yes, of course, but we are then left wondering why there is no simple standardisation of the lights which we could use to develop a key to the language. To put it simply, if humans had discovered a race of sentient beings on another planet and wished to communicate with them by light, we'd probably start by showing a simply set of colours to represent something physical, like a river or a mountain, or even the craft we'd arrived in. We'd then wait for an answer – perhaps the exact same set of lights displayed in such a way as to show that the natives understood the code. Gradually the light-vocabulary could be expanded and we'd all live happily ever after. But that's not what UFOs are like. The lights do not appear to exhibit commonality across similar situations.

The most persuasive theory is that the lights are somehow part of the propulsion system or an unavoidable product of such a system. Perhaps these objects use another part of the electromagnetic spectrum or an as-yet-unknown aspect of the quantum world which creates visible light as a waste product or a derivative. Witnesses have very frequently said that the lights on objects change or come on or go off as the object stops, starts, accelerates, etc.

And then there are the beams of light which are seen emerging, usually from below the object directed towards the ground or water. Quite often they are reported as seeming to be "searching" for something. At other times witnesses have conjectured that the beam is sucking up water or other liquid. Quite frequently the beam is described as "restricted like a laser beam" or as

not reaching the ground, or not illuminating the ground.

The main witness at RAF Cosford in 1993 testified that he saw an object approaching the airfield, sending out a beam, and appearing to be searching for something. During his harrowing encounter with UFOs in 1980, Lt Col. Charles Halt said that lighted objects shot beams of light down; one of them very close to where he was standing. During the sighting on the Hudson River in 2004 the witness saw a UFO emitting a beam of light. That time it was blue but people have reported red and white as well. In pre-Internet days we have excellent examples from Loring AFB, 1975, Rendlesham Forest in 1980, and Belgium in 1989. More recently, beams of light have been reported from Cosford, 1993, Cheshire in 1998, Essex in 2000, and Ruby Bay, New Zealand in 2004. The Blair County, Pennsylvania incident of 2002 provides one of the most detailed and perceptive account of lights and the beams of light phenomenon (see the Tyrone Photo, below).

But there are plenty of other recent examples.

Cleveland, 1996

On February 28, 1996 an incident occurred in the skies near Cleveland, Ohio during which an unidentified object was seen by pilots in two separate aircraft. The aircraft involved were Mesa Airlines' flight 5959[41] flying into either Saginaw or Cleveland and a Mesaba Airlines[42] Bombardier Dash-8. The latter was designated flight 3179 from Detroit to Pellston (the hour and a quarter scheduled flight is now operated by Delta). As with the two planes in the 1995 Lufthansa incident, the Mesaba aircraft was flying in roughly the opposite direction to the Mesa flight.

It was ten to one in the morning local time when Cleveland control got a call from the incoming Mesa flight saying that they could see traffic low at their twelve to one o'clock position and asking whether the controller could

see it on the radar screen. The controller answered no, and flight 5959 replied that, whatever it was, it was probably about two to three thousand feet below them, possibly about ten miles off and that the light was “pulsating”.

The controller had just acknowledged this news and told 5959 that they’d keep an eye open when another aircraft – Mesaba 3179 – came onto the frequency to ask whether the light in question was north-west of Detroit. When the Mesa captain answered in the affirmative flight 3179 said:

“A really bright white light, sometimes flickering... ah... underneath the clouds is where I saw it.”

Cleveland then came back to ask 5959 whether they could still see it. Mesa answered yes and gave further details. The pilot said the light sometimes got dimmer and then grew brighter …

“But it looks like a rotating light around it like ah... like a Frisbee type thing that's going around it.”

Mesaba confirmed they’d seen it as they came out of Detroit – bright flashes like lightning underneath the cloud deck which then grew dimmer. Interestingly, Mesaba then appeared to talk about two different lights:

> *Mesaba 3179: The light that I saw was just like, maybe, I don't know... twenty-five miles northwest of Detroit. Is it what you're referring to or you're talking about the light at our twelve o'clock now about ten miles?*

The first officer confirmed that they could see the light at twelve o’clock

and then hesitated slightly before saying "*the captain … ah … says it's pulsating*." He or she went on to say that …

> *It looks like oncoming traffic. But it's just sitting about the same place that it's been the whole... here about ten or fifteen minutes we've been watching it.*

Air Shuttle 5959 then came back to agree. They said that the pulsating light looked from their viewpoint as if it were over Saginaw, MI, that is, directly ahead of the Mesaba Dash 8. At that point the Cleveland controller handed over the Mesa Air Shuttle flight to Saginaw control and, although flight 5959 must have complied, they kept coming back on the Cleveland frequency – presumably to keep up with the fascinating story.

Mesaba now informed Cleveland that the white light was still ahead of them and appeared to be below their flight level; they estimated at about 10,000 feet. The controller grabbed at that information to ask whether they thought the light might be a reflection or a beacon …

> *Ah... natural phenomena that you're getting a reflection, 'cause I got nothing out there.*

Mesaba answered that there appeared to be a solid cloud deck below them and that it was definitely not a beacon because it was a constant light. It was pulsating and now looked a little greenish white, plus red. At that point the Mesa plane revealed that they been listening-in, even though they'd been handed over. They'd obviously been ordered to descend.

> *Air Shuttle 5959: Yeah. Hey, be advised we're descending to four*

thousand feet right now and as we descend through ten thousand feet, that object is above us right now. It is not on the ground. It's about ten thousand feet.

And then 5959 summed up everyone's feeling.

I tell you what, that is weird. It keeps sitting there pulsating.

Cleveland checked again that the light was still dead ahead of the Mesaba Dash-8 at which point the latter said he'd blink his landing lights directly at the light/object and see what happened. There appeared to be no effect and the light was now appearing red and green but still pulsating and hanging in what appeared to be the same place. The Mesa plane said that the light also appeared to be rotating (as had been reported earlier).

The controller at Cleveland was clearly very interested because he asked Mesaba whether they could get a photo and the Dash-8 managed, they said, to get a passenger taking a picture on an old Instamatic camera. Evidently one of the cabin crew told the Mesaba flight deck that they'd seen something similar a few nights previously.

A few minutes later Mesaba's captain confirmed that he, personally, had taken a photo out of the left cockpit window. They signed off at that point and there is no indication that the photos turned out or whether, even if they did, it was possible to see anything. You can listen to the aircraft-ATC exchanges on a YouTube extract[43].

Clinton, British Columbia, 2001

British Columbia is a huge, and visually stunning Canadian province extending around twelve hundred miles north of the US border on the west

coast. Most of it is trees, mountains and lakes and it offers some of the best winter skiing in North-America. The capital, just to the north of the US border, is Vancouver, situated on one of the most beautiful coastlines in the world.

Around 250 miles northeast of Vancouver lies the small town of Clinton, a hunting and tourist hotspot where hikers and climbers occasionally get themselves into trouble – even in summer time.

At 3.10am on the morning of August 19, 2001 a three-person Search and Rescue party saw a bright star-like object moving erratically in the night sky for about twenty minutes. The three had extensive experienced of the area and told the British Columbia UFO organisation, UFO*BC, that they'd never seen anything like it before. The light eventually resolved as three lights in triangular formation which did some amazing aerobatics – 90 degree turns, figure-eight manoeuvres, and loops. The lead light was brighter than the other two and the watchers believed it was a single triangular object.

And again, three lights in the sky translate into a strange "object" seen indistinctly, but sufficiently well for the witnesses to go on the record as to the fact that they saw an "object" and not merely lights. I have lost count of the number of witness statements saying similar things in numerous countries.

Bromley, 2003

On November 17, 2003 at 2.20am "two adults and a child" reported to the police seeing twenty or thirty flashing red lights in the sky. The lights were subsequently seen by police officers, civilians and the crew of a police helicopter.

The objects made what the witnesses called "whirring noises". They evidently recorded the event on video and phoned the police who sent two

officers to investigate. One of them used a convenient lamppost as a guide and remarked that the lights were zig-zagging and running across the sky at speeds far in excess of those an aircraft could manage.

Using their radios, the attending officers asked a police helicopter – which was in the area at the time – whether they could see the lights. The answer was affirmative. The helicopter crew wondered whether the lights could be those of aircraft approaching one of the large airports in the region. Enquiries were made of the local military air traffic control centre at Swanwick but they responded that they had no contacts at all at low level at that time.

The Tyrone Photo, 2002

On October 20, 2002 a hiker in Blair County, Pennsylvania managed to get a couple of colour photos of what appears to be a disc-shaped object in the sky. The man did not wish to be identified but he did submit his two photos along with a brief statement as to how he came to take them[44].

It was about 7.30pm on a Sunday and the chap was just walking back to his car after hiking on Ice Mountain near Tyrone when he saw a bright light moving towards him from the south. At first, he thought it was an aircraft but then the light appeared to stop in mid-air and start to pulsate, going dimmer and then brighter in turn. He also noted a haze of orange light around the object. Then the light began to pulse more rapidly and, eventually, so fast that it was a flicker. At the same time a beam of intense blue-white light shot out from underneath.

Unlike many witnesses who see similar things, this witness gave more details about the beam. He said it was not an ordinary searchlight but a very narrow beam which did not diffuse with distance. He described it as being “tight” from top to bottom. At that point, the object was probably a quarter of a mile away and about 1,000 feet up. He described the beam’s width in terms

of a piece of dental floss held at arm's length.

The pulsating, flickering light then went out and so did the beam, but the object stayed in the sky, hovering silently. The hiker ran to his car, retrieved his camera, and managed to get two shots before the object suddenly shot straight up into the air and disappeared at "fantastic speed".

The two photos are good. They show an object which looks disc-shaped with a dome (compare with the Australian railway crossing photo). The framing of the trees provides perspective and context.

The object displays the typical tilt which seems to be the standard operating attitude of such things and the beam activity reminds one of the object seen at night near RAF Shawbury in England in 1993 (except that no one seems to have thought to ask just how narrow that particular beam was).

Kingston, Ontario, 2003

NUFORC have, in their database, a fascinating account from Kingston, Ontario which speaks, in a detailed way, to one configuration of lights on a UFO and to the peculiar nature of those lights. The event happened on January 24, 2003 when a lady was driving home from work at around 6.13pm. Her account is one of the most detailed reports on a low-flying object ever given and it does seem, to the outsider, to be much too detailed, and in very strange ways, to be a hoax. Unfortunately, due its being from a single civilian witness, the incident scores low on the credibility scale. Nevertheless, this is a good example of a case which still carries a very high degree of believability.

It was a Friday evening and the lady was travelling home along Highway 15. As she drove northeast from Kingston, she passed the entrance to Stephentown Lane. She was listening to the Mamas & Papas on a cassette when she noticed two white lights above the tree line to her right. They were

coming towards her and she slowed right down as they approached. She described them as being like two white bus headlights in the sky.

The lady's account is extremely detailed, and all the more fascinating for that. She explained that, as the lights came closer, she noticed a smaller red light blinking in a steady sequence between the two white lights and another small red light just inside the right-hand white light.

There was no other traffic and, by this time, the witness said she was driving extremely slowly. She then had an idea which she hoped would allow her to see whatever it was more clearly. She flashed her headlights onto full beam. What the additional light allowed her to see stunned her. It was a black equilateral triangle with bright white, dome-shaped lights at each apex. She said that these lights were bright but that they did not project a beam or even any apparent indirect light onto the ground below. So, the light reached her eyes but did not illuminate the ground. How was that possible?

This driver was no scaredy-cat! As the object slowly glided closer she wound down her window and leaned out to watch it as it passed overhead, point first, in the direction of Kingston Mills locks. Her view of the underside of the object was pretty clear and she describes not one, but two, distinct triangles, one on top of the other. The triangular object on top was grey and indistinct and the lower one was a black triangle. She said the whole thing looked small enough to fit inside a school gymnasium and that each point of the triangle was actually a more complex set of shapes. In her own words as provided to NUFORC:

"It actually had arrow-like points at each of the three corners. After the point, the shape made something like a small inward rectangle, then outward to a larger rectangle shape, back to a small inward rectangle, and then to the next point. Each side was exactly symmetrical to itself and to each other side."

The whole event lasted around two minutes, during which the object made no noise – at least she did not hear any above the stereo playing “Dream a little dream of me”. Neither were any other of her car’s systems affected. As it disappeared towards Kingston Mills Locks, two cars came around the bend and she resumed her drive home. NUFORC contacted the witness directly and received confirmation of the sighting as well as gaining a positive impression of her honesty and credibility. She specifically asked that she receive no publicity from her report.

Her account constitutes a very well observed and recorded sighting, and it offers a number of features some of which are extremely common while others are reported much less frequently (perhaps because witnesses very rarely get to see such objects so close up):

White lights at each apex
Smaller red lights inside
A triangular object which appeared to be composed of two triangular objects laid flat on each other
Detailed arrow-like points to each apex with rectangular sections inside them
No apparent noise
Extremely slow flight
No reaction to her flicking her headlights onto high beam
Bright white lights whose light reached her eyes but threw no discernible light onto the ground.

It is just a shame that she was not able to get a photo and that no-one else saw that strange triangular object.

Bolton Abbey, Yorkshire, 2003

In May 2003 a traffic police officer in a Subaru high-speed chase car was travelling towards Harrogate on the A59 in North Yorkshire. The road is a difficult one for drivers because it winds up through the hills and through a steep-sided gorge. In the context of the extremely crowded British road system this main road is relatively quiet except in summer, and in places it is extremely tempting for drivers and motorcyclists to break the 60mph limit. And, if those motorists are anything less than expert drivers, the road is a death trap of hidden bends, steep edges, and blind summits. The local police therefore use unmarked chase cars with cameras and radar to catch illegal speed merchants. The penalties are severe and if they clock you at very high speeds you face loss of licence, a lengthy ban, and retesting.

At 9.30pm on that evening the road was quiet and the traffic cop had nothing in front of him as he breasted the steep hill between Skipton and Bolton Abbey at a sedate 50mph. It was at that point that he saw a bright light in the sky at his one o'clock. He was travelling east and the light appeared to be moving roughly south. He slowed the car a little and made sure his dashcam was recording what he was seeing.

One or two people have commented that the account of this incident – which was submitted anonymously by one of the officer's colleagues – says that he was travelling westbound, whereas the map and details indicate he was travelling east. This would appear to be a simple error because all the other details of the case are entirely consistent with an eastbound journey. I, personally, know that road very well and the dashcam photo shown online confirms to me that he was definitely headed away from Skipton and towards Bolton Abbey (and eventually Harrogate).

From another angle, a commentator stated very firmly that the light could not have been an aircraft because there are no airports in that direction. This

is total nonsense. The place in the sky where the light was photographed is extremely close to the alternate approach to Leeds-Bradford Airport. Further to the east there are several RAF bases and their own approach and departure paths operate roughly north-south. In fact, the skies over the Vale of Yorkshire and the southern Dales are busy. In addition to commercial air traffic, they are also used by private pilots and by the Royal Air Force and USAF for training.

There are at least four RAF bases to the east of where the light was seen as well as the USAF/RAF listening station at Menwith Hill which can take helicopter traffic. So, although the photo taken by the officer makes it look as though he is in the middle of nowhere, the direction he is facing is crowded and busy airspace.

That does not mean that I am arguing that what he saw and photographed was simply an aircraft. His description of it as staying still and being composed of many smaller bright lights certainly does not support an aircraft being the source of the light. One also has to remember that the officer probably drove that route often and, like all who live in that area, was well versed with civilian airliners approaching Leeds-Bradford, RAF and USAF fast fighter jets, transport aircraft, helicopters from Leeds and the various bases, and myriad other type of aircraft in the sky.

The interested outsider can see the photo and map (which shows the correct direction and ties in with the photo) on the "UFOInfo" web site[45]. In Britain as in the United States police officers are reluctant to put their necks on the block when they see something they don't understand, so this officer did not report the sighting publicly.

The Tinley Park Lights, 2004

Tinley Park lies on the south-western outskirts of the city of Chicago. The

now-famous “Tinley Park Lights” appeared on a summer’s evening on August 21, 2004 and then again on Halloween (October 31).

UFO organisations and police stations received hundreds of calls to report lighted objects and individual red lights moving slowly across the sky. Reading the accounts makes it seem as though there was some sort of aerial ballet in progress. The lights performed little “tricks”: they hovered silently for long periods (some said hours), they drifted slowly, they appeared as triangles, they “stacked” themselves, drifted in straight lines, flew solo, and generally got themselves into all sorts of formations as though competing in a flying ballet competition. The USAF Thunderbirds and the RAF Red Arrows display teams are far more daring, but don’t do displays at night.

Hundreds of people saw these red and white lights from the suburbs of Oak Forest, Mokena, Frankfort, and Orland Park as well as from Tinley Park itself. The FAA said there were no radar tracks, but locals got a good few videos from both nights (many are online). At least one witness used binoculars and said that he could see an object to which the lights were attached. One of the best videos online shows the way that the strange lights formed upon each other and changed formation slowly. Whoever took the video also made sure that there was context in the shot in the form of a sign and cars on the road.[46]

Flare balloons were strong suspects. This was partly because a concert by the British heavy metal rocker Ozzie Osbourne had just ended in Chicago. However, the History Channel’s TV series *The UFO Hunters* tested the theory and found it wanting. They constructed a framework and attached flare balloons to it. The effect was good, but the test showed that such balloons shimmer and cast light around them to illuminate themselves, the frame, and other balloons. The History Channel programme on the Tinley Park lights is on YouTube. You can also see from the video mentioned above that the

lights change formation and float for much longer than flare balloons. In the shot, one or two of the lights move off from the others whereas a group of flare balloons would always tend to stay in a rough group and only move if carried as a group by the wind.

However, the Tinley Park sightings are still a focus of considerable controversy. The link with the concert and then with Halloween raises suspicions but also the fact that the lights were seen again in October 2005 – on the first of the month – and then again on Halloween 2006[47].

Ruby Bay, New Zealand, 2004

The vineyard-rich town of Ruby Bay in New Zealand lies about ten or fifteen miles across a shallow bay from the port of Nelson on the north coast of New Zealand's southern island. The witnesses were at the beach on the evening of September 6, 2004 when they saw a teardrop-shaped object beaming a light down into the water offshore. Other people from a camp-site also saw it and watched as six more "orbs of amber light" joined the first. The objects evidently spent the rest of the night flitting from place to place around the bay and over the surrounding hills.

To this day no-one has been able to explain the events. Sceptics have tried ball-lightning and plasmas leaking electrical charge down into the water, but there has yet to be a convincing scientific explanation of how such phenomena can exist in the atmosphere for minutes at a time and appear to travel. Even more problematic for the sceptics is the fact that these orbs were also seen over land.

California, 2007

About seventy miles due east of San Francisco lies the town of Manteca. On the night of October 8, 2007, a passenger aircraft was on its way from

Oakland to Burbank at about 21,000 feet. The pilot's statement says that there was little traffic and that visibility was so good he could spot other aircraft at ranges exceeding fifty miles.

After take-off and levelling off, the aircraft turned roughly south-east to take up its course towards Burbank, which lies just to the north of Los Angeles. It was at that point that the pilot noticed a set of "unusually-colored" lights off to his left which were at about the same altitude as his aircraft. The bright yellow lights were many miles away (probably over the foothills of the Sierra mountains). The first officer agreed on the lights and their brightness. The captain stated that he'd seen similar lights over the ocean but that they flickered and had turned out to be oil-rig flares.

As the aircraft continued to fly southeast the flight crew noticed the yellow light get brighter, larger, and apparently closer. Soon, as it seemed to parallel their course, the light took on a shape which he described as semi-spherical on top and "V" shaped below (the "pear shape" which although not common is often reported). The object seemed to get larger as the time went by.

By this time the two pilots were very curious as to what the object might be. The first officer called Oakland and asked whether they could see any traffic in the area of the aircraft. Oakland responded that there was just a Beech King Air ahead of them and on an opposite track, descending through 13,000 feet. Both pilots had already seen this aircraft. The air traffic controller could see nothing at their nine o'clock at the same altitude.

Some fifteen minutes into the sighting the crew could still see the object and it had grown to fill a four-inch square section of the side cockpit window. The pilot said that, although he could not definitively estimate size or distance, he could say that, whatever it was, was large and of a very unusual shape. He specifically stated that the light did not appear to be like a light on an aircraft but that it outlined the entire object (some observers in other

sightings say that their objects were surrounded by a haze of light).

The report indicates that the crew must have watched this object for at least fifteen minutes before it sped away – "at great speed" – to the north. The statements say that both pilots (each with over 5,000 flying hours) were "flabbergasted" by what they'd seen and that it made the hairs on their necks stand up. The reporting pilot went so far as to say that he was "spooked" by the event.

The outsider who has read Volume 1 will not be surprised to hear that the captain and his first officer did not report the incident to the FAA or their airline. He said they did not want to be judged as nut-jobs. Like witness after witness the pilot stressed that he was not saying he object was extra-terrestrial, only that two experienced pilots had never seen anything like it and that it clearly spooked them.

A final point of interest is that the shape – semi-circular above and "V" shaped below – was the shape that the crew of the BOAC Stratocruiser saw back in 1954.

Birmingham, 2008

On May 2, 2008 a police helicopter in Birmingham reported a near miss with an object carrying "non-standard" lights. It was a very strange "near-miss" report which was serious enough for the UK Airprox Board to thoroughly examine the circumstances.

That night, the helicopter – an EC135 – was on routine police surveillance duties over the north-western suburbs of Birmingham. It was at fifteen hundred feet, doing a standard orbit or circle at about 80kts roughly over an area known as the Sandwell Valley Country Park. The park is a fairly large area of open space on the edge of West Bromwich – a neighbouring town. What the helicopter might well have been keeping an eye on was the hugely

busy M5 motorway which bisects the park. There were three crew – the pilot, a trained police observer in the right front seat, and another trained observer in the rear seats operating the technical gadgets. At the time of the incident he was wearing night vision goggles.

At night, of course, air crew have to be particularly alert for dangers to their aircraft and, at 9.50pm, the front observer urgently reported lights flying quite close around the helicopter. All three crew noted two lights – one blue and one green. They were solid and not flashing and were certainly not regulation aircraft running lights. The pilot estimated that they were only about 300 feet away. He said that he moved the helicopter to avoid a collision, so the implication is that the lights had the appearance of being dangerously near.

His change of course did not help, however, because the lights, after veering away a little to the north, returned to circle the helicopter. Next, the police pilot banked and flew east towards Birmingham city centre. The occupants of the helicopter thought they were dealing with some sort of aircraft, so the pilot descended and asked the observers to see whether they could pick out the aircraft against the slightly lighter sky (visibility was excellent that night).

Neither observer could do so and the lights seemed to return to the Sandwell Park area (i.e. back the way they'd come). The crew apparently decided that the lights were attached to a model or a drone and the helicopter started searching the open ground to try to find a person or persons operating a radio-controlled model. The pilot was of the opinion that the lights came from such a model and that its lights were meant to help the operator keep track of it. The front observer said that he saw an object behind the lights but what that object might have looked like is not recorded in the Airprox report.

The Airprox investigation was extremely thorough. It examined and rejected all of the following:

Flashing from the rotor blades;
Reflection from the Night Vision Goggles (NVG) lenses onto the inside of the aircraft canopy (discounted after a test flight to look specifically for such an effect);
Anaprop (anomalous propagation of weather conditions);
Other aircraft (radar showed nothing in the vicinity);
Military flights;
Civil, police and military UAV;
Gliders, kites, and tethered and untethered balloons;
Meteorological balloons;
General aviation flights (there were none);
Laser light shows;
Fireworks or flares (the lights seen were said to be not as bright as pyrotechnics and they did not descend to the ground);
General activity in the parks (there was none);
Microlights (it was felt to be highly unlikely that an illicit microlight flight would deliberately harass a police helicopter while carrying non-regulation running lights, and the police observer would likely have made out the shape.

And the fact that it was reported to have circled the helicopter means that, whatever it was, was pretty quick). Finally, the investigators also contacted the British Model Flying Association and asked whether they thought that a model or drone could have been the source of the incident as described. They responded in the negative as they felt the lights were too high and that any

operator would not have been able to maintain such obviously accurate control with just the lights as reported as reference points.

I'd guess that all outsiders would agree. Anyone who has tried to control a drone or a model aircraft at even 300 feet in broad daylight in a moderate breeze knows how problematic it can be. At night it would be extremely difficult and to fly it *around* and near a helicopter doing 80 to 100mph would be close to impossible.

Reading the report, this last aspect is something the Airprox Board did not consider. Whatever it was, circled a helicopter flying at around 80kts (92 mph). There are model aircraft that can do that sort of speed (but not high-end hobby drones – which can only manage about 50mph). Doubtless an expert could fly a model at high speed around a building or other fixed point, but doing it at night at 1,500 feet around a helicopter moving at 92 mph, which was moving fairly unpredictably, would be impossible. The object also carried lights bright enough to prevent experienced observers from seeing the model itself.

Other potentially valuable pieces of data that were not mentioned by the Airprox report were: how long did the event last, and how did it end - i.e. what did the lights do? Unfortunately, as with a lot of official reports many of the vital details are missing. The Board concluded:

> *Regrettably therefore, despite extensive tracing the source of the lights could not be identified.* ***[48]***

Worthing, Sussex, 2009

This incident was reported by a chap who was an ex-loadmaster and flight mechanic. In his report, he explained his credentials in great detail (for example he had around 3,000 hours of flight time) before saying that, on

September 17, 2009, he had been with two friends having a quiet cigarette in his back-yard near Worthing in West Sussex. Worthing is a well-known seaside resort on the English south coast.

At about 9.40pm he noticed a bright, star-like light, a white ball of light, travelling straight and level at about 200 kts at a height he estimated to be between 6,000 feet and 10,000 feet on a south-easterly heading; that is headed out across the English Channel towards the coast of France (which lies between about ninety miles away on that course). The object made no sound and, although he stressed that he was sceptical of UFOs, he also noted that there was no strobe or anti-collision beacon and no navigation lights on the object.

The witness and his friends watched as the ball of white light continued in a straight line for a while and then suddenly shot straight upwards at an incredible speed. They watched until, in less than ten seconds, it grew dimmer and dimmer as it ascended through the atmosphere.

> *I'm no astronaut but I am interested in space travel and I would have said that the light was leaving the atmosphere of our planet.*

Within three minutes another similar ball of light appeared, following a similar course, and did almost the same thing. This time the initial course was about the same as that of the first object, but the light was climbing steadily from about 6,000 feet. When it reached what he estimated was about 10,000 feet the light made an abrupt turn from a heading of roughly 130 degrees to 180 degrees and then shot straight upwards. It disappeared within about fifteen seconds.

The main witness was clearly baffled by what the group had seen but, to the end of the report, he stressed the truth of what he'd reported.

I state for the records that the information I have provided is the truth.

Norway, 2013

The reporting pilot in this case kept his name, that of the co-pilot, and the airline – even the exact location – out of his public report to MUFON. He says only that he was flying a commercial aircraft (and it must have been of a reasonable size to warrant two pilots) for a European airline.

The aircraft was headed northeast over Norway and descending through 16,000 feet when both pilots noticed an orange light ahead of them climbing through the sky. At first they thought it was a flare but it kept climbing until they saw that it was not just a light but a solid object – a dull grey sphere with a black triangle attached to the bottom (pear-shaped?). The orange light was, the report says, near the top of the sphere but specifically not on top of it.

Soon the flight crew noted that the object was coming towards the aircraft. It climbed through their altitude and travelled across the top of their cockpit windshield. The pass was so close that the pilot estimated it at less than 1,000 feet. He said the thing – which looked to be no larger than about ten feet across – was accelerating as it passed.

An enquiry to air traffic control revealed that the controllers had no other traffic at or above their altitude or in their area. They couldn't help when the aircraft told them that they'd had an object climb towards them and pass over them.

The reporter was extremely cautious in both the report itself and any expectations they might have had. There was an explicit desire to remain "below the radar" and the pilot implied that he or she had only reported it to MUFON because their "other half" wisely thought it important to record "these things". They said their gut feeling was that the object was a small, drone-type object and ruled out it being a balloon as it was travelling against

the 240 degree wind of about 40 knots and had been accelerating as it passed.

> *Apart from that [the reporter concluded] I make no deductions as to its origins or intentions.*

I've seen some expert "fence-sitting" in my time and that pilot deserves at least an Olympic bronze. But, if they'd really and truly believed in their "gut feeling" I think there'd have been no report to MUFON regardless of the views of their "other half". However cool and detached the pilot has tried to be in the report, the fact of the matter is that they were pretty spooked by that sighting and most certainly did not think it was a drone. If that had been the most convincing explanation, the incident would have been immediately reported to the authorities as an air miss and it would most definitely never have reached the MUFON database.

British Columbia, Canada 2016

The global spread of sightings is well demonstrated by the reports which get sent to the British Columbia UFO organisation "UFO*BC" in Canada. Their annual lists of reports are well worth perusing. Many of them are serious and fascinating, others (as can be expected) not so much. I compared two of their lists of sightings fifteen years apart. The final report in each year is worth reading (and comparing!)[49].

Surrey is a township to the southwest of Vancouver and just a few miles north of the US border. On April 2, 2016 in clear daylight at about 6.10pm a witness saw a very bright light, about double the size of a star, approximately 50,000 to 60,000 feet up and approaching from the west. The light went over them and then turned north. The witness and partner then watched it through binoculars and saw that it was a dark silver ring which was spinning fast in a

counter-clockwise direction. Above the ring they thought they could see gold "flames" shooting upwards. The ring appeared to be spinning but the "flames" were not.

As a passenger plane flew underneath at an estimated thirty to thirty-five thousand feet they realised that the object must be huge – they estimated "about the size of a football field". They phoned the local news radio and also the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) who, they said, were "extremely interested".

The object then turned east and travelled a bit more, apparently getting higher, before it went out of sight.

From the outsider's point of view the case is interesting but not too different to many others. But in this incident the RCMP actually visited the witnesses very soon after the sighting (in fact at 6.40pm), talked about it and created a file on the affair. You should note that the sighting was of a light apparently flying at double the height of a normal passenger aircraft and changing direction (i.e. not a rocket, meteor, or satellite). So why were the RCMP interested?

Ireland, 2018

It was dark as Flight BA 094 droned through the freezing upper atmosphere on its way from Montreal to London-Heathrow[50]. It was 0647 in the morning of November 9, 2018, towards the end of a long flight. The pilots could see the coastline and lights of the south-west of Ireland on their left-hand side and would soon be spotting the coast of Wales and expecting to descend in preparation for landing in London.

The pilot of the British Airways aircraft thumbed her communication button and contacted Shannon air traffic control. She asked them if there were any military exercises in the area because something had come

alongside her aircraft moving very fast. It was a bright light which had come alongside and then veered sharply to the north. Shannon told her there were no military exercises and nothing showing on either primary or secondary radar. A Virgin pilot flying from Orlando to Manchester reported multiple bright objects. He believed they might be meteors. But he went on to say that they had climbed away at a speed which was astronomical. He estimated it at Mach 2 or more. A third pilot was reported by the Guardian as saying, “Glad I’m not the only one.”

Interviewed by a newspaper after the event, an Armagh astronomer said that the whole thing was probably shooting stars. And he could be correct. But the outsider is left wondering.

Commercial airline pilots see shooting stars all the time. At their altitudes and on long, night flights such things are an extremely common phenomenon. Three pilots in three separate aircraft saw these lighted objects and, while one offered the possibility that they might be meteors, he was also the one who use the words “climbed away”. The female BA pilot was very sure that it had “veered away to the north”. Neither flight pattern is possible for a meteor.

The words of the third pilot are also packed with hidden meaning. He said: “Glad I’m not the only one”. If the pilots genuinely thought that the lighted objects were meteors there would be no reason to say such a thing. The pilots would all have said something along the lines of “Wow, just look at that display of shooting stars. That’s quite a sight.” Then they’d all have gone back to the routine of long-distance flying with something quite spectacular to tell their loved-ones when they got home.

As with most pilot sightings it is often the unspoken indicators which make the outsider sit up and think. The mere fact that they ask a question of air traffic control means they must have seen something very unusual. The words they use are usually very precise in aviation terms and one can

generally rely on their eyesight.

If trained airline pilots do not recognise something as a meteor, it probably isn't one. If they say that it turned north and that it climbed away at high speed, it probably did.

Which means that there's a high probability that those objects on November 9 off south-west Ireland were not military aircraft, and they were not shooting stars.

**

Humans' ability to sense the electromagnetic spectrum is quite limited and seems to be mainly limited to the eyes. Our eyes can sense a small part of the spectrum but cannot go any further – for example into the infra-red or ultra-violet bands. But this is not the full extent of our disabilities. Not only can we only sense a fraction of the spectrum, we are also limited as to what we can sense in the visible part (and unfortunately this applies to our cameras as well). Light has many characteristics and one of them is direction or polarity. Our eyes detect polarised light as glare and we generally ignore it, but all visible light can be polarised and – for the most part – we cannot "see" it. A type of shrimp called the Mantis Shrimp has incredibly complex eyes which can see polarised light and this helps it to spot prey in complex and high-contrast backgrounds. Scientists are now developing cameras which mimic this ability. One wonders what such cameras might sense, that our eyes and current cameras do not, in the light from UFOs[51]. Light is also a bit of an enigma in that it is both a particle (a photon) and a wave. Physicists are still trying to fully understand how that little trick works and what it might mean.

Chapter 9

Fast Swimmers

[It was] dark coloured, oval in shape and made no sound whatsoever.

Marine Chief Engineer off New Orleans, 2017

Simultaneously with the Captain's arrival, the UFO rose towards their bows as if going up an inclined plane, and leisurely circled the ship twice. Then once again off the port beam, it descended at moderate speed, heightened its green brilliance, then, tilted at an angle, it entered the water with its leading edge.

Timothy Good; *A Need to Know* Pan Macmillan. (about a 1976 sighting by a US Destroyer)

To make things even more interesting for the outsider, UFOs not only come in different shapes, colours, and sizes but they have the ability to travel in the water as well as the air (and, presumably, in space too). Hundreds of people have seen objects leaving and entering rivers, lakes, ponds, and, of course, the sea.

It's yet another difficult-to-believe aspect of the UFO phenomenon. We humans have submarines and we have aircraft but – try as we might – we do not yet have the ability to build large craft that can be at home above and below the waves (except a few very clever torpedoes). Yet we have a mound of evidence to suggest that these things exist and that objects can fly or swim as they choose.

According to author Robbie Graham, the Russians believe that an astounding proportion of around fifty percent of UFO reports are connected with the oceans, and sixty-five percent with oceans and lakes. His book, *Silver Screen Saucers*, quotes Russian sources as saying that, in the 1980s or 1990s, one of their nuclear submarines was followed by no fewer than six objects which totally out-manoeuvred the Russian boat. At times the objects were said to have travelled at upwards of 230 knots (265mph) underwater and, when they departed, they simply went to the surface and flew off. Few civilians do much swimming in the middle of the oceans, so they are somewhat limited in their opportunities for spotting such phenomena. It is interesting, however, that, while the Russian Navy was once prepared to give a few examples, neither the US Navy nor the Royal Navy release details of any encounters (yet we have some evidence that they may have had experience of unidentified submerged objects – for example during the Shag Harbour and the Tic Tac episodes discussed below).

It's hard enough getting one's mind around the things that are supposed to flit around in the skies, without me also throwing into the pot those same strange objects also swimming about in the sea. Take it from me, though, that UFOs and water go together like waffles and maple syrup – the aficionados call them "USOs" (unidentified submerged objects). There's even a pretty strong argument that, in reality, the waters of our planet are where you will find *most* of these weird objects.

However, there's a dearth of corroboration surrounding UFOs interacting with water. In Volume 1, I included a number of instances where unidentified objects appeared to interact with water. There are witness statements from the Hudson Valley wave listing events where UFOs seemed to shine lights into water. In another, separate, case a witness said that the object seemed to be sucking water up. On the internet you will find scores of alleged sightings of

UFOs over and in water.

The sceptics have always scorned such reports as being “impossible”. How could a supposed “spacecraft” transition from air to water and why would it need to do that? Furthermore, they argue, it is impossible to physically do the high speeds claimed for UFOs underwater.

These arguments seem eminently sensible. Firstly, no human craft has ever been able to fly *and* swim under the waves except a few modern missiles and torpedoes. Secondly, it is difficult to see why UFOs would need to go under the water as well as fly swiftly through the air, and thirdly, high speed underwater seems counterintuitive. Even sharks and dolphins have trouble doing anything more than about 40 knots beneath the waves (which is pretty fast seeing that a warship is very special if it can do that sort of speed on the surface).

The first two of these questions remain unknowns but the third is beginning to yield to science – or at least to military science. In 2017, the Royal Navy ran an “Advanced Concepts” competition for young marine engineers. The engineers were asked to come up with realistically-viable submarines of the future. What they came up with were some amazing shapes and systems for advanced underwater craft. But the most amazing thing was that they worked on the principle – apparently with Royal Navy blessing – that speeds of up to 150kts (172mph) were theoretically possible underwater. I think one can be fairly sure that the top research departments of both the British and US militaries (and several others) will be working on technologies which will eventually produce at least those speeds and possibly more.

So, apart from uncorroborated tales of Russian underwater experiences, what good evidence is there for USOs? Here’s a few of the best.

The Delarof, 1945

If there were a Hall of Fame for USOs, the case of the USAT Delarof would be one of the first to be nominated, and for good reason. During the very mysterious events which enveloped the US Army Transport ship *Delarof* in 1945, some of the crew claimed they saw an object emerge from the water and fly away. This occurred two years before Kenneth Arnold saw his squadron of "flying saucers" and before the contentious events at Roswell, New Mexico.

Those latter events have stamped themselves upon post-war history while the Delarof case has undeservedly faded into obscurity.

The incident occurred over a timespan of just a few minutes in the midst of a major war, but it arguably overshadowed the entire valorous history of that particular transport vessel. It happened off the Aleutian Island of Adak – part of a string of islands which stretch from the coast of Alaska to within a few hundred miles of the Russian mainland at the Kamchatka Peninsula. During World War II the Japanese continuously bombed and attacked the Aleutian Islands and the US government fortified some of the islands and evacuated others.

The facts of the case rest on the testimony of a radio operator called Richard S Crawford. He told NICAP (a couple of decades after the event) that it happened in the spring or summer of 1945 when the *Delarof* was heading back to Seattle from the Aleutian Islands.

Crawford's testimony was that, one evening, as the ship was heading into the open ocean and passing the island of Adak (about half way along the archipelago), a group of about fourteen sailors were on deck. They saw a dark object emerge from the sea and rise straight up in the air. Some of the men actually saw the object emerge from the sea while others only responded to their shouts and saw it in the air as it rose up. The object was about a mile

from the ship and, in size, was the width of a finger held at arm's length. Suddenly the object stopped its ascent and proceeded to head for the ship and then to circle it a few times. The witnesses said it was dark and circular; around 150 to 250 feet in diameter. It then sped off and disappeared to the south or south west. The crew saw flashes of light from the area where the object disappeared.

We should remember that this sighting occurred when the Allies were still at war with Japan and the Delarof was alert for trouble. Anti-aircraft guns were manned during the incident but the order to fire was not given. The Captain evidently kept his cool and, although he kept the ship at action stations for the rest of the day, nothing else transpired. Patrick Gross, the French UFO enthusiast, has details on his excellent website and he reports that Crawford was also interviewed by the atmospherics physicist Dr. James E. McDonald, in 1967.

The case is too old now for any further analysis but it resonates with the sighting of a sphere over the aircraft carrier USS Franklin D Roosevelt during Operation Mainbrace in 1952 (see Volume 1). That object was seen near a major military exercise at sea. Twenty years later Canadian witnesses reported strange goings on in the sea off Nova Scotia, and those goings on may have involved the US and Canadian navies.

Shag Harbour, 1967

One of the most famous sightings of UFOs in conjunction with water happened on October 4, 1967 at a place called Shag Harbour in Nova Scotia. Located at the extreme south of the Canadian province of Nova Scotia, Shag Harbour is a small fishing hamlet with a resident population of around 450 people.

The story of the Shag Harbour UFO has strong connections with

apparently totally unconnected events like that at Exeter in New Hampshire two years earlier (see Volume 1).

On the night in question a group of people watched a row of lights at a forty-five-degree angle, moving over the water off the coast. The lights were flashing in sequence just like those of the Exeter object. As they watched, the line of lights sank into the sea about half a mile from shore. Local fishermen naturally thought an accident had happened and they quickly reached the location in their boats. A single white light continued bobbing on the surface for a while until, before they could reach it, it sank beneath the waves. The "rescuers" also noticed a yellowish froth on the sea for about forty feet either side of where the light had gone down.

Still believing that what they'd seen was a maritime accident, the witnesses reported the matter to the authorities. No civilian boats were missing, and no Canadian Navy or US Navy vessels were unaccounted for. The same went for civilian and military aircraft. Nevertheless, Canadian Navy divers searched the area and the seabed for two days but, apparently, found nothing.

About a week after everyone had shelved the matter as simply a bit of a mystery, locals saw more lights offshore and just above the water. These lights disappeared a couple of times before again seeming to sink into the water.

Two Canadian UFO investigators looked into the matter in great detail. Don Ledger and Chris Styles believe that the Canadian and US Navies did find objects and that the objects were eventually watched as they emerged from the water and flew off into the sky. They think that objects were tracked as they moved north underwater. The pair believe that it was a UFO "crash" which was hushed up and then covered up.

Hudson Valley, 1983-84

In the Hudson Valley, the years 1983 and 1984 witnessed one of the most famous UFO waves of all time. The events extended over a much longer period and also included a number of very compelling sightings of UFOs interacting with water. I have addressed the basics in Volume 1 but we could look at a couple of strange incidents involving interaction with water which took place during that "wave".

Incidents like that at Brewster, New York in 1983, reported in J Allen Hynek's *Night Siege,* are relatively rare. On March 24, 1983 John Miller was driving to the north of the town of Brewster at about 8.30pm. As he got near his home he came across an object hovering over a lake nearby. The brightly lit object was only about 200 feet from him and about 150 feet in the air over a pond (for British readers that means not the village duck-pond but a small lake). As he watched, two bright "searchlights" came on from underneath the object and they seemed to scan the pond as if looking for something. As the lights moved across the water, Miller heard a faint "whooshing" sound. That very characteristic is reported by many people who see objects over water, as though the lights are somehow sucking up either the water or some constituent of it.

Also reported in *Night Siege* was an incident which happened on October 28, 1983. A witness saw a triangular object hovering about fifteen feet over a lake. It had a non-reflective surface and the witness – who had been an aircraft maintenance engineer – was certain it was like nothing he'd ever seen before. It was only two hundred feet from him, but he could not hear any sound. Suddenly nine red lights came on along the sides of the object and a red beam shot out from underneath which, the witness said, seemed to be probing the water. Fascinatingly, he said that the red beam "interacted" with the water in four different places across the lake.

Bridlington, 1998

Bridlington is a pretty seaside town located on the coastal cliffs of North Yorkshire. It was originally a fishing village which became a Victorian seaside resort and in-shore fishermen still use its narrow harbour for their boats. The port lies just to the south of the cliff-girt promontory of Flamborough Head.

One night in July of 1998 the Bridlington lifeboat[52] was called out to investigate an area of sea about five miles off Flamborough Head. A fisherman had called in a sighting of a "large, dark" object that he said had fallen into the sea from the sky. This was sometime after 9.00pm on July 12, 1998 (it would still have been light at that time in these latitudes). Paul Sinclair investigated a bit and found out that the "large, dark" object had remained on the surface for some time. It seems that a rescue helicopter was also called in but that the search was called off – having discovered nothing – at about quarter to one the next morning.

The fact that the fisherman called out the lifeboat and the lifeboat called out the search and rescue helicopter means that the fisherman was very certain about what he saw and the authorities considered the reporter credible and the situation serious[53]. But nothing was found.

Just as at Shag Harbour in Canada reliable witnesses had reported an object entering the water, the authorities had responded, and the official version was that nothing was found. One has to say that, if these objects can move as fast underwater as they do in the air, it is no surprise that searches come up empty.

Hudson River, 2004

On January 27, 2004 at about 4 am in the morning a witness saw a triangular object hover over the Hudson River off the west side of Manhattan.

The witness told NUFORC that it emitted a light-blue beam which “appeared to be searching for something”. It then lowered itself into the water.

A single witness means that the report can only carry very low credibility. A person can be mistaken about a dark object hanging over distant water on a cold, dark January morning and, like many such reports we have no way of evaluating the witness’ physical condition, state of mind, or visual acuity.

Yet the outsider is left with a strong sense of believability. UFO reports are so common these days that no-one makes any money out of them and the potential for fame is so low as to be almost negative. In fact, even civilian witnesses risk their status among friends and relations if they report such an object. For military and official witnesses, the stakes are even higher. Nevertheless, people still report what they see, and I stand in awe of their bravery. It takes a great deal of what the British call “bottle” to report a UFO in the sky, but it’s an entirely different matter telling someone you’ve seen something entering, leaving, or playing about in the water.

Columbia City, 2005

On January 31, 2005 an object was said to have melted a frozen pond near Columbia City, Indiana. The witness volunteered that: “*This was an evening of ice-fishing I will never forget!*”. He described an elongated triangle coming over the trees to the east of the small farm on whose small lake he was fishing. He said the object moved over the ice and lowered itself slowly. It sat without moving for a couple of minutes and then – leaving a trail of steam from the pond - rose and drifted off over the trees again. Two cell-phones had died, and the witness said his battery-operated fish-locator had also been affected by whatever it was. He said that the ice had been melted to a depth of about two inches by the object.

So here is an interesting mental exercise: What was it doing? If it was just

taking a rest or watching the ice-fisherman, why did it set down on the ice and not on solid ground? Could it have been using the water in the ice for some reason?

Tampa, 2011

On January 19, 2011 something shot out of the water south-west of Tampa, Florida, and with a boom, whizzed upwards. Four men had gone on a fishing trip and they were then well out at sea – about 80 miles southwest of MacDill AFB. They'd been fishing all day and into the night, and for most of the night had been watching a thunder storm get closer to their position. At about two in the morning every electronic piece of equipment on the boat went dead and they heard a rumbling noise from the ocean which they specifically noted was not thunder from the sky. The storm was now much closer, and they said that the lightning looked green against the sea. The group began to talk (presumably in deep, manly voices) about getting out of there and back to shore as quickly as possible.

However, they decided to stay – as they had originally planned – until daybreak. But half an hour later they said part of the ocean glowed green and the green area became quite large. One of the men joked that it might be a submarine but then something came out of the water a mile or two from their fishing boat. The green-glowing object, which they estimated was probably three to four times bigger than their 45-foot boat (about 130 to 180 feet across), hovered for about ten minutes above the water.

Then the witnesses watched as it travelled west a little before turning a bit "as though to check us out". It then shot up into the sky. They said there was a flash and the object was gone. A boom followed (very unusual for high speed UFO reports). Once the object had left the area their equipment came back on and they hightailed it for the shore just as the sun was coming up.

The witnesses were sure that the time should not have been that far advanced. They felt they'd lost about four or even five hours during the incident.

The Tampa event illustrates three powerful sub-plots in the UFO story: the connection with water, the link with thunderstorms, and the mysterious "missing time" factor.

If you trawl through enough UFO cases you will regularly come across those in which the witnesses are baffled by the way time behaved during the event. The common factor is that, when they think about the incident afterwards, they realise that they have somehow skipped several hours in their lives.

This happens to those who feel they have been abducted but is also reported by people who do not seem to have experienced such a thing. In this case a group of fishermen mysteriously "lost" a few hours while they were watching a USO. Were they unwittingly enmeshed in the UFO's own time dilation effect, were they abducted for some reason but had no memory of it, or was it simply the result of tiredness and a stressful experience?

Reports of USOs are reasonably common but reports of such things from highly experienced airline pilots are as rare as hens' teeth.

Puerto Vallarta, 2012

The Mexican resort of Puerto Vallarta lies at the base of the thirty-mile deep Banderas Bay, which faces due west into the Pacific near Guadalajara. On September 2, 2012 someone whom NUFORC describes as an "exceptionally well-qualified witness" reported a sighting he and his fiancée had had from their balcony at about 1.20am. The witness was a senior pilot with thirty-seven years' flying experience - twenty-seven of them with an airline and ten as a fighter pilot in the USAF. Standing together in the warm night air, and for a total of about forty minutes, the pair watched a dozen

orange lights rise up out of the ocean and fly away into the sky.

The first thing they noticed was four bright orange lights climbing out over the sea. They were about three to five miles away and started at eye level. They were not in any formation and made no sound over the sound of the waves. The pilot estimated they were flying south west (about 230 degrees) into a high overcast which had followed earlier thunderstorms. Their speed he estimated at about 200 to 300 knots (about 230 to 350 mph).

Just as these four disappeared, two more identical objects emerged from the water and followed suit. More followed on roughly the same course. Through their binoculars the couple saw bright orange with “dark vertical lines encircled around the object”. The pilot estimated the distance to the objects from the known direction and dimensions of the shoreline of the bay[54].

New Orleans, 2017

These strange, watery reports have kept coming in, right up to the present. In 2017 NUFORC received a fascinating report from the crew of an off-shore supply ship in the Gulf of Mexico.

At about 7pm on March 21, 2017 the ship was about eighty miles off New Orleans when the crew saw a very large object (the Chief Engineer said it was around five times the size of their 240 foot supply ship). In those latitudes 7pm was just before dusk. The Chief Engineer and four other crew were on deck when they saw something come out of the sea about half way between them and an oil rig which was about half a mile away – so only around 400 yards away.

The huge object was visible for about forty seconds. He said it rose out of the water by about forty feet but there was no water dripping from it. Then it zipped into the sky at an angle of about 30 degrees at what the Engineer said

was so fast it was gone in a second. He described it as “dark coloured, oval in shape” and it “made no sound whatsoever." NUFORC evidently spoke to the engineer and estimated him to be “a very capable, and very reliable, witness”.

Seventy years separate the Delarof incident and the object which amazed the supply-ship crew off New Orleans but the two sightings are extremely similar!

I have described these examples not only to illuminate the incredible subject of USOs but also to underpin arguments about the physical nature of such objects. Whether in the sky or in the water these things are seen and heard by a very diverse group of witnesses and over many decades.

Chapter 10

The Game-Changer

Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast

Lewis Carroll – Alice in Wonderland

The “US Navy Affair”, as it may well become known in the future, centres on the steady flow of absolutely stunning UFO material into the public domain since 2017 about primarily US Navy incidents. Technically some of it was known in part before that year, but all great UFO events must have a start date even if that date is arbitrary.

In December 2017 it became widely known that a series of spectacular sightings had been made by US Navy ships and aircraft back in 2004. Following that, in 2018, there emerged a video of radar, IR and visual contacts with strange objects which occurred in 2014 and 2015 off the east coast of the USA. The original video became known as “Gimbal”, for reasons which will become clear.

In 2019, evidence emerged that there had been contact with a UFO which penetrated US airspace without a transponder and without answering ATC enquiries. It travelled fast, did some strange things, got itself lost among airliners in a busy airway, and was chased unsuccessfully (we believe) by F-15s from Portland, Oregon. More to the point, it was initially recorded on

radar and was seen visually by several commercial airliners.

Finally, also in 2019, sensational evidence emerged from the 2014-2015 east coast sightings in the form of public testimony from no less than five US Navy pilots.

Together, these incidents represent probably the most important evidence of strange things in the sky that we have ever managed to acquire. Not only do they provide mounds of sensor and very credible human testimony, but they also represent a possible seismic shift in government attitudes.

Back in the late 1940s the US and UK governments were worried about "flying saucers" mainly because they suspected they might be machines created by their enemies. It seems likely that the same suspicion is responsible for the reaction of the US government in the twenty-first century. There was the so-called "Tic Tac" affair in 2004 and we now know that the government, after pressure from Senator Harry Reid, funded a fairly detailed examination of the subject by establishing AATIP (*Advanced Aviation Threat Identification Program)* in 2007 (or possibly 2008). That study lasted through 2012 and there was a series of US Navy and possibly USAF sightings from about then and right up to today.

In 2019, the US Navy made a public announcement which, on the surface, seemed eminently sensible and unarguable. It announced that it was changing the regulations and rules surrounding the reporting of unidentified objects by its personnel. It said that, although the reports would still be confidential, it wanted to make the process more open and less stigmatising. On the surface, a laudable aim. But, as a few other UFO observers have remarked, why is taking note of things which invade protected airspace suddenly important? Shouldn't it have been important all along?

The explanation – as reported by POLITICO – could easily have been put together by Major General John Samford who delivered the famous press

conference during the Washington DC flap of 1952. At that momentous event he said that they'd had numerous reports and that, after resolving a large number of them:

> *… there are then a certain percentage of this volume of reports that have been made by credible observers of relatively incredible things*

What is happening in 2019 has many parallels to the attitude and approach of the US Air Force in the late 1940s and early 1950s when it seemed, according to Captain Edward Ruppelt, that it was trying to record and investigate as many sightings as it could with as much scientific neutrality as possible. Report after report came in, investigation after investigation was carried out, but they were unable to come to any conclusions and, on the surface, it appears they gave up and decided to put it about that the whole thing was laughable (although Project Blue Book continued to gather reports until 1969).

In 2019, the US Navy spokesperson told POLITICO:

> *There have been a number of reports of unauthorized and/or unidentified aircraft entering various military-controlled ranges and designated air space in recent years. For safety and security concerns, the Navy and the U.S. Air Force take these reports very seriously and investigates each and every report. As part of this effort, the Navy is updating and formalizing the process by which reports of any such suspected incursions can be made to the cognizant authorities. A new message to the fleet that will detail the steps for reporting is in draft.*

I guess what the Navy is really saying is: "We've been pretty remiss about

recording these things over the years because we thought they were not defence-significant. But now we think they might be important, so we've changed out policies". What they might also be saying is: "We've never believed these things existed. But now we do and that changes everything".

In light of the numbers of reports they must have received from highly trained pilots, their reaction is not surprising, but it is nevertheless commendable that the Navy is approaching the whole issue in a more open manner – even if the results will still be kept mainly behind closed doors.

The release of the Tic Tac and other interception data by the US Department of Defense (albeit through the third party of the "To The Stars Academy") has rendered the period between 2017 and 2019 immensely important; arguably the most critical period for UFO studies in the past eighty years. But revelations and stunning evidence in the UFO field would not be complete without controversy. In this case several UFO enthusiasts believe that the whole thing may be yet more disinformation; the US government releasing clouds of misleading data to hype up the UFO craze when they need a distraction from the real story. Some conspiracy theorists in this case believe that the whole show is a cover for machines that have been created by the US or other governments.

But, putting this aside for the moment – we'll come back to it –let's first examine the public facts surrounding the most critical events.

The Tic Tac Affair, 2004

Before we begin to examine the Tic Tac affair I must make one thing extremely clear. At no time in any of the evidence which US Navy pilots and personnel have provided in the last few years has anyone claimed that what they saw, or what their sensors recorded, was an extraterrestrial spacecraft. The outsider is struck when reading the many accounts by the

professionalism and neutrality of the witnesses. They saw or experienced something; it is up to others to analyse and interpret. The carefully guarded statements of US Navy pilots and spokespeople are almost identical to those made by serious UFO investigators; the objects exist but we do not know what they are.

In this volume, we've looked at some pretty impressive sightings so far, and we've commented on their credibility on the basis of such things as radar corroboration, numbers of independent witnesses, and the status of the witnesses. Many of the sightings have been incredibly compelling and have been based on senior – almost unquestionable – testimony. However, you should now prepare yourself for perhaps the most impressive series of connected and evidenced UFO reports in modern history. Even more stunning than the reports themselves is the fact that they were voluntarily released by the US Department of Defense (DoD). Christopher Mellon, an advisor to the *To The Stars Academy (TTSA)*, has said that there have been many more sightings by US fighters but that these have not yet been released. But there's no doubt that the cases that have already been allowed into the public domain are game-changers. Each case, on its own, is stunning but, together, the main cases since 2004 represent nothing less than the beginning of a new era in the study of the UFO anomaly.

Why the hyperbole? Not so much the cases themselves. Military fighters have been involved with UFOs on both sides of the pond for decades. We have examples from the UK, from France, from Chile, from Iran, and several other nations in addition to the US. But the past few years have been different for several reasons:

> *The US Navy cases offer far more detail and corroboration that any other previous case. We have sensor films and voice data*

(albeit, apparently somewhat redacted) that is far more detailed than for previous events.

These cases carry the additional credibility of named, senior military pilots. We have one very senior pilot from the 2004 events, and two named pilots plus three unnamed from the 2014-15 incidents.

We are now getting additional, named testimony from ship-borne service people together with commentary on the things that their radars and IR sensors picked up.

The cases somehow "feel" different to experienced UFO researchers. There seems to have been a slight but discernible shift in official attitudes.

There is still no open discussion of the subject, no "disclosure" of long-closeted evidence, no detailed analytical summaries. But long-standing UFO researchers can sense the tiniest shift in the wind. It could well be that the US Navy is being used as a stalking horse to test the public reaction to a gradual release of stunning information. We'll see.

The first case came to light, in December of 2017 when the *To the Stars Academy* released video and details of an event that had hitherto been kept mainly under wraps by the DoD. Within certain circles the events were known, but there was little evidence in the public domain.

The event concerned an incident involving US Navy F/A-18s in 2004. It was the first time that the US Department of Defense had voluntarily released important evidence of unidentified objects through a third party. In early

2018, after the first release of data, people who were close to the action said that the evidence was just the tip of the iceberg – a select few of dozens recorded during the DoD's five-year study called the *Advanced Aviation Threat Identification Program (AATIP – 2007-2012)* and of sightings by Navy pilots since that study ended. We now know that their statements were absolutely true.

The total cost of the AATIP study is reputed to have been around $22m, although there is some confusion as to how much of this was spent on the study itself. Some or all of the budget may have gone to Bigelow Aerospace, but the programme was led for at least part of its four or five-year life by Luis Elizondo[55]. He resigned in protest at the lack of government action over the observations and Christopher Mellon[56], another ex-government official who joined the *To The Stars Academy*, argues that there is simply no joined-up recording or evaluation of these sightings. Clearly, if the policy can be taken at face-value, the US Navy is now seeking to remedy that fault.

**

About AATIP

It's a wonderful (in its original meaning) thing about UFO studies but everything you come across is never as straightforward as it may seem. And this applies to what appears to be a very uncomplicated government programme. The Advanced Aviation Threat Identification Program, in spite of its apparent solidity, is proving difficult to pin down. According to Luis Elizondo – who ran it for a period – the program was initiated in 2007 at the behest of Senator Harry Reid. It ran until 2012 when its funding ran out – a period which looked like five years.

There is, however, a great deal of uncertainty not only about dates, but

about names, and who actually ran the programme.

The New York Times said that it obtained contracts which showed that Congress appropriated a little under $22 million beginning in late 2008 through 2011 (i.e. about three years). The money was, the Times said, for research and assessments of the threat posed by anomalous objects. There is evidence that AATIP was either part of, or succeeded, an earlier programme called AAWSAP (Advanced Aerospace Weapon System Applications Program). The words “aviation” and “aerospace” also seem to be interchangeable in the AATIP name. There is a possibility that the name AATIP was actually a nickname for a sub-programme within AAWSAP.

The widely accepted history appears to be that the programme was begun by the Bigelow Corporation (and funded by Robert Bigelow) but that the US government funded it for at least two and possibly three years thereafter.

Whatever the exact names and dates it seems the research revealed some stunning things. In 2009 there was a Pentagon briefing paper – seen by the New York Times which said of the programme:

> *what was considered science fiction is now science fact*

It also stated that the United States (and by implication the rest of the world) was incapable of defending itself against some of the technologies discovered[57].

**

In November of 2004 there occurred one of the most important UFO incidents of the past seventy years. The objects seen may not have been much different to many other sightings, but the evidence and the personnel

involved certainly are. In that month, the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, USS Nimitz, together with its numerous squadrons of aircraft and its naval battlegroup, was in the middle of working-up exercises prior to operational deployment. In the battlegroup was the USS Princeton, a powerful Ticonderoga-class cruiser equipped with the (then) very latest Aegis and SPY surveillance equipment. Courtesy of the inimitable George Knapp of CBS, who got hold of an unclassified thirteen-page report on the events – we know that the sightings occurred over a period of about a week but that the main show happened on November 14, 2004[58].

During that fateful week (November 10 to 16, 2004) the battlegroup had been carrying out various complex exercises designed to test their preparedness for full operations. Launching and recovering aircraft, manoeuvring the fleet of defensive vessels, coordination with submarine components, responding to dummy enemy attacks, testing complex communication systems, and detailed surveillance of the battle-space were all part of the average working day. When carrying out such exercises the defence of the key asset – the aircraft carrier – is all important. Without the immense capability of the Nimitz, the battle group would become simply a collection of warships with limited long-range capability. So, keeping a very sharp eye on what was happening in the air, and on and under the sea around them was task number one, each and every day.

George Knapp's report said that the battle group had been seeing anomalous returns on their radar and other sensors the whole week. The returns were from objects doing the sort of things with which UFO specialists have become very familiar: inhumanly-rapid descents, high turn rates, high acceleration, immediate stops, phenomenal speed, and elements of invisibility. On one occasion an object was said to have descended from 28,000 feet to within feet of the ocean surface in less than one second. Even

if we humans had a craft that could perform that trick it would kill its occupants with the G-forces implied by that ferocious descent and immediate stop.

The speed of that descent was around 24,000mph. A modern high-speed elevator can reach about 40mph and they never come to a dead halt.

At about 10am on November 14, the USS Princeton requested an E2 Hawkeye airborne surveillance aircraft to try to identify an unknown object that the ship was tracking on its advanced systems. The electronic equipment on board such Airborne Early Warning (AEW) aircraft is extremely sensitive. In maritime patrol aircraft it can even distinguish between small boats and large waves from many miles away. The Hawkeye aircraft reported what it, at first, had thought was a wave. It was a faint return but, unlike a wave, was stationary. At that particular time the Hawkeye was training with a pair of F/A-18Fs operating under the callsign FastEagle and led by a senior pilot by the name of Commander David Fravor. The Princeton requested control of the two fighters and it vectored them onto the strange return.

When Commander Fravor and Lt Commander Jim Slaight arrived within a mile of the assigned location, they saw an object very close above the water. They described it as a featureless “tic-tac” shape (foreshortened cigar-shape) with no sign of a means of propulsion, no wings, and no control surfaces. It was about 45 feet long and the water appeared to froth and boil underneath it[59].

As the two aircraft approached, the object very quickly rose to between 500 and 1,000 feet and started to move at about 500 knots (575mph) over the sea. Fravor could only follow it visually, his aircraft’s radar could not paint the object (only the Princeton’s sensors could track it and, even then, apparently not continuously). The Commander dived towards the “tic-tac” but it seemed to react to that and shot off vertically at supersonic speed.

When Fravor asked the Princeton whether it was still on their scopes, the ship responded with:

> *You're not going to believe this. It's back at your CAP [combat air patrol area].*

The object had moved twenty miles in a few seconds. In a later interview, Fravor said that, whatever it was, he wanted to fly one.

Subsequently, evidence has emerged from other service personnel of some fascinating additional details. These include the allegation from two servicemen that there exists a longer and clearer version of the video released by the Department of Defense, and a parallel allegation that sonar (i.e. underwater) contact was made with one or more objects. Kevin Day, who was Senior Chief Petty Officer and radar specialist on the Princeton confirmed, during the Military "Tic Tac" Witness Group Interview at UFO MegaCon on March 27, 2019, that strange tracks had been seen since November 10th when groups of ten to fifteen of the objects were spotted near Catalina Island. On the day in question the object investigated by Commander Fravor had dropped from 28,000 feet to close to the surface of the ocean in just 0.78 seconds[60] (see above).

Of the tens of thousands of highly credible UFO sightings in the past decades, the 2004 Tic Tac incident is the one which finally put the existence of unidentified flying objects beyond suspicion and firmly into solid certainty. Those who study the subject with any degree of scientific scepticism have long known that inexplicable UFOs exist, but proof of their strangeness and existence has been difficult to come by.

The report on the 2014 sighting by Commander Fravor (obtained by George Knapp) came to some incredible conclusions. Namely that:

the 'Anomalous Aerial Vehicle' was of unknown origin and represented technology not currently in the possession of the U.S. or any other nation.

it had stealth abilities which made the use of radar against it largely ineffective.

it exhibited extreme performance but did not have the lifting structures or control surfaces required for traditional flight.

it must have had advanced propulsion enabling it to go instantly from hovering to very high speed and to make very abrupt course changes.

it was able to 'cloak' itself, becoming invisible to the naked eye.

it was possibly capable of operating underwater without being detected by the most advanced sub-surface sensors.

Incredible as all of these conclusions are, I would encourage the reader to consider just one of the phrases used. It sums up the whole UFO issue:

> ***technology not currently in the possession of the US or any other nation.***

The Gimbal Incidents, 2014-2015

Revelations around US Navy sightings have continued to emerge right up to publication. In 2015, *USA Today* reported that U.S. Navy F/A-18 Super

Hornets, flying at 20,000 feet, encountered a UFO off the east-coast of the United States. The Department of Defense declassified and released a video of the incident which contains audio from the crew expressing amazement at what was happening. The object, like Commander Fravor's sighting in 2004, had no wings or tail, and no obvious signs of a means of propulsion. Looking like a child's spinning top it was tracked by the F-18's infra-red sensors as it flew steadily across the sky and then rotated about thirty degrees on its vertical axis.

The incident is now better known as the "Gimbal" affair (the name of the video file which was released). One sceptic believes that it is a video of the IR returns from another jet – made to seem as though it is rotating by the lens cover of the gimbal-mounted IR camera. The theory has some merit in a technical sense and the rotating lens can make man-made objects also seem to rotate. We do not have enough data – especially about what came immediately after the segment of video released by the Department of Defense. But I have to remain sceptical of the "gimbal" explanation. These were two highly trained F-18 crews. As part of their training they engage other aircraft in mock combat at different ranges and using different sensors. I seriously doubt that both aircraft would be fooled by the IR exhaust plume and bloom of another aircraft. Another aspect conveniently ignored by the argument is that the aircraft had their sophisticated radars operating and those showed not just the one object being tracked by the IR system but "a whole fleet" of them. And it seems that one of the objects stopped dead in flight.

The other reason that one has to be convinced by the sighting is the reaction of the two pilots. It was not "Check it out guys, there's another fighter ahead of us", but sheer, incredulous amazement. The outsider should watch the original video on the *To The Stars Academy* website[61].

And the final nail in the sceptical argument's coffin comes in the sighting's

corroboration by truly amazing evidence from five US Navy airmen who were given permission to be interviewed by the New York Times in 2019[62]. Two of those airmen – Lieutenants Ryan Graves and Danny Accoin – gave their testimony on the record while another three gave evidence but requested that their names not be revealed.

We know that both of the named pilots were flying with Naval Fighter Squadron 11 (VFA-11). We also know that the pilots began noticing these anomalies after their aircraft radars had been upgraded to the latest equipment. The old F/A-18 radars had been of the mechanically-scanned variety but, in or around 2014, VFA-11 was upgraded to the latest Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) variety. These radars have no moving parts and powerful, computer-assisted scanning systems which allow them, among many other things, to distinguish smaller targets at greater ranges and with improved accuracy. The radars are extremely sensitive. In fact the aircraft of top NATO nations are only now being upgraded to AESA systems.

The strange anomalies began showing up while the USS Theodore Roosevelt's battlegroup was on training exercises off the Atlantic Coast between Virginia and Florida in the months from late 2014 and the spring of 2015.

The two named pilots told the newspaper a number of truly stunning facts about the encounters they and their colleagues had had with the anomalistic objects. Among other things they stressed that the objects had incredible endurance (by current military standards). Graves said that the objects picked up by their radars would be "out there" all day. He said:

> *Keeping an aircraft in the air requires a significant amount of energy. With the speeds we observed, twelve hours in the air is eleven hours longer than we'd expect,*

The encounters were not only at distance. In fact, it was a close encounter which caused the pilots of VFA-11 to believe that there was an air-safety hazard. Lieutenant Accoin testified that he "interacted" with the objects on two occasions. Once, after picking up the object on his radar, he set course to intercept its track. While he was flying 1,000 feet below the object he was puzzled by the fact that, although his sensors showed it was there, he could not pick it up visually with his helmet camera. On another, his missile system locked onto a target, and he could see the object on radar, but he could not see it with his own eyes.

On yet another occasion one of the squadron's pilots was flying with another fighter when an object flashed between the two aircraft. The pilot described the object as a cube enclosed in a translucent sphere. It was a near-miss which scared the heck out of the whole squadron. Up to that point there had been an underlying belief among the aircrews that the objects could be top-secret US drones that were being tested in the areas of the Atlantic reserved for military training. But the near-miss made them angry. They could not believe that the government would test drones in such a way, endangering the lives of Navy pilots.

Between the summer of 2014 and the Spring of 2015, US Navy pilots saw objects with no visible engine or infrared exhaust plumes. The sightings during the exercises included spinning tops which accelerated to hypersonic speeds, made sharp turns and stopped in mid-air. Lieutenant Graves famously said:

> *Speed doesn't kill you, stopping does*

The Oregon Intruder, 2017

On October 25, 2017 an unidentified object flew across the Pacific north-west of the US. It was tracked by FAA and military radars – possibly even those of NORAD – for a good deal of time and prompted the launching of USAF F-15 interceptors. It was also watched, at a distance, by several commercial pilots.

The object – which was not transponding and which did not respond to communications from the ground – tracked from northern California across Oregon before suddenly becoming invisible to radar.

The commercial pilots (the main players had call-signs of Alaska 439, United 612, Skywest 3478, Southwest 4712, and Alaska 525) all agreed that it was a white "aircraft" at around 37,000 feet that was too far away to tell the type or if it has markings of any kind. The Southwest 4712 pilot told the air traffic controllers that it was the strangest thing he'd seen in thirty years of flying. He said:

> *This was a white airplane and it was big. And it was moving at a clip too, because we were keeping pace with it, it was probably moving faster than we were... It was a larger aircraft.*

Much of what was seen and said on that October day was little different from the sorts of things that air traffic controllers and pilots have been saying about UFOs for seventy years, but there is a major difference. The Oregon encounter was not only fully recorded but the tapes are online for everyone to hear. This was a very fast, large white object without a transponder, which flew across northern California and into Oregon. It's highly unlikely but it could have been an extremely naughty civil airliner (it would not have been military because the military could simply have said so, and everyone would have quietened down) except for one thing. Once the F-15s were scrambled,

it became invisible to radar. The recordings are online[63].

Disinformation

A number of somewhat sceptical observers have proposed the theory that the whole US Navy Affair is an elaborate US government plan to distract the public from the fact that they have developed extremely sophisticated craft about which they do not wish the rest of the world to know. The theory is that the US government is testing these revolutionary vehicles in remote Navy testing areas against the most advanced radars and sensors in the world – those carried on US warships and aircraft. According to the theory, they did this in 2004 off the west coast against the USS Nimitz battlegroup, and in 2014-2015 off the east coast against the USS Theodore Roosevelt battlegroup.

Tyler Rogoway of "The Drive" makes a strong case for part of the US government using the widespread fascination with UFOs to cloud the issue and mask their testing of super-advanced new technology.

It's an interesting possibility but I believe it falls down on a number of counts. Firstly, one would expect that, if the US government had develop machinery by 2004 that was so advanced it could do what the USS Princeton and Commander Fravor saw – hypersonic speed from a standing start, ultra-fast descents, right angle turns, and so on, one would think that the technology would be fully developed ten years later when the pilots of VFM-11 encountered strange objects. The technology certainly appeared to be so mature that it could be trusted to zip between two F/A-18s flying at speed in tandem without hitting them. Secondly, both battlegroups spotted groups of objects – meaning (to me) that the technology was so advanced that it was not in the prototype phase but in at least initial production phases. One account speaks of "fleets" of objects and another mentions "ten to fifteen"

objects near Catalina Island.

Thirdly, if, by 2004, the US government technology was into initial production of groups of super-sophisticated craft, one would have to assume that it would be in full production by 2014.

Fourthly, if by 2014 this advanced technology – which included super-stealth, control of inertia, control of gravity (necessary for flying, stopping and hovering without visible propulsion or aerofoils), invisibility to radar and eyesight, and hypersonic speeds – was in production sufficient enough to create the large numbers of craft seen in 2004 and 2014-15, the production would have become known to the wider military or even to the public.

And fifthly, the US government is currently spending billions on trying to develop hypersonic vehicles – missiles and aircraft. It might seem strange that a government would waste quite so much effort and money on something they've had since 2004.

The crux of the sceptics' argument appears to be that these revolutionary craft must be kept top-secret[64]. But two questions arise: how and why?

How is this production – requiring significant resources, incredible amounts of money, and huge numbers of engineers and scientists, being kept secret? The development, prototyping, testing and production so far must have taken fifty years and several production sites for electronics, composites, propulsion systems, and so on, yet not a single shred of information has leaked. To crew a "fleet" of such craft would require scores of highly trained personnel and the storage and maintenance would require far more.

The US and UK were not able to keep the development of atomic weapons secret. In spite of massive security there were spies willing to hand over the secrets to other nations. Are we really saying that the US has solved the security problem to the extent that it can keep multiple layers of activity on

an incredible scientific and engineering issue totally secret for probably fifty years? This technology makes everything we can currently do, obsolete. How do you keep that a secret?

Finally, *why* is it being kept secret? If the US now has fleets of such incredible machines why not reveal them to the world? A massive, parallel colonisation of the Moon and Mars, the defeat of enemies of the US, and the saving of billions of dollars on old-fashioned reaction rockets would be a great way to do it. To maintain a secret like this only to wait until several H-bombs were on their way to US targets is just ludicrous. Revealing such technology would stun the whole world and give the US a political and military advantage of unprecedented dimensions. No power on Earth could stand against this sort of technology.

At present the US is spending immense amounts of time and money trying to devise a way of putting humans back on the Moon. There are phenomenally expensive programmes in place to develop a Lunar Gateway space station, a Lunar Transfer Vehicle, a Lunar Descent Vehicle, a separate Lunar Ascent Vehicle, and, most expensive of all, a brand-new rocket more powerful than the legendary Saturn V – the SLS system. All of this is massively behind schedule and, because of that, it might never happen. At the same time there is a pressing need for new sources of rare elements which many people hope will be available on the Moon and Mars.

Are these sceptics saying that the US would not, in the past decade, have used such new technology to speed things up and make the US the richest nation on the planet by far?

In the early twentieth century the British worked on the principle of military dominance by ensuring that the Royal Navy was capable of taking on the two next-most-powerful navies in the world simultaneously. If the US possesses fleets of super-advanced hypersonic, inertia-defying vehicles, it

could take on the whole world at one time.

Chapter 11

Are these objects real?

… I saw it on the [radar] screen and out the window … it was a whitish-blue object. Not a light, a solid form … a saucer-shaped object.

Howard Cocklin, Air Traffic Controller, Washington National Airport, 1952 - (Washington Post, 2002).

Having reviewed the various characteristics of observed UFOs – shape, lights, size, and so on – what we need to consider here is whether a proportion of UFO sightings are physically real. Are they as real as the car in which you drove to work this morning or the aircraft in which you started your last vacation?

We have mountains of witness testimony from the past eighty years, but a great deal of it is weak, uncorroborated and untestable. Nevertheless, we have hundreds of reports from extremely reliable witnesses who actually didn't want to be witnesses. Pilots, police officers, air traffic controllers are all extremely reluctant to report UFOs. There is anecdotal evidence that a very high proportion of them don't report the things they see. But enough do, and that makes for a highly credible database of probable objects that cannot be explained in prosaic terms. The "Game Changer" events, as I describe them in the previous chapter, form a convincing base of evidence. They include UFOs which could be seen with the naked eye, recorded by advanced radar systems, and tracked with infra-red scanners.

So, what do we know about the physical reality of some UFOs?

We see them – so, according to everything we know about physics, there must be something there which reflects light across the human visible spectrum;

We hear them - although most reports are of almost completely silent objects, people report some of them emitting humming or whistling noises. These objects must somehow interact with the air around them to create sound waves;

We touch them. A few very important witnesses say they actually touched a UFO, and some have been burned or otherwise damaged by their presence;

They touch the ground. A few events have involved UFOs landing and leaving marks on the ground and sometimes damaging vegetation;

Our light-sensing gadgets can also see them. Still and video cameras catch the light from these objects (so we can be sure that the sightings are not figments of human imaginations); and,

We sense them using other parts of the electromagnetic spectrum – some via traditional radar, and, more recently using advanced sensors such as those of the USS Princeton during the Tic Tac episode and the infra-red trackers and radar used by the F/A-18s over the Atlantic in 2014-15.

It would seem, therefore, that at least some of the inexplicable objects that are recorded each year must be physically real. And yet, there are aspects of the UFO phenomenon that remain difficult to reconcile with physically-real objects. Some are seen to appear from, or disappear into, thin air. Witnesses also testify that they sometimes morph into other shapes, and they can apparently make themselves invisible – to both the visible and other parts of the electromagnetic spectrum – at will.

But perhaps the most puzzling thing is that UFOs are very often associated with other paranormal activity. Most UFO researchers would dearly like for this not to be the case but there is just too much evidence of strange goings-on in the vicinity of UFO sightings for us to be able to ignore the possibility. Crop circles are perhaps the most controversial of these goings-on, but UFOs are also associated with the appearance of weird creatures – Bigfoot and its relations around the world – strange animals, and unusual humanoids.

The question therefore is: What else might be going on?

Part 3

Paranormality

That means that whatever is generating the incidents does so in a manner that does not remain consistent over time.

> John B Alexander, Ph.D; *UFOs: Myths, Conspiracies, and Realities.* St. Martin's Press.

It’s as if some cosmic puppet master had written a laundry list of every spooky phenomenon of modern times and then unleashed them all in a single location, resulting in a supernatural smorgasbord that no one could possibly believe, even less understand. The events were random and unpredictable, and never happened more than once in the same place or in the same way.

> Kelleher, Colm A; *Hunt for the Skinwalker: Science Confronts the Unexplained at a Remote Ranch in Utah* . Pocket Books.

Chapter 12

From our Mole - 3

‘Good evening Mr Churchill. No, by God, it’s the middle of the night over there. To what do I owe the honour of this call?’

‘Good evening Mr President. I apologise for the unannounced call, but the matter is most urgent. I have been informed by my contacts in MI6 that you had an unusual discovery a month or two ago at a place called Roswell.’

‘Winston, please! You’re not Prime Minister any more, this call is over an unsecured line.’

‘If you’ll check the lights on your telephone, Harry, you’ll see that the line is fully scrambled. MI6 were kind enough to forget to remove the scrambled line when I ceased being Prime Minister, but I have not used it until now.’

‘OK. You’re right, but what about Roswell? It’s late and unlike you, who can work at all hours of the night, I need my beauty sleep.’

‘I’ll be brief. I understand that your people found and retrieved some very strange items of what one might call high technological interest.’

‘How do you know that? It’s above top secret and we’ve put several layers of bluff and double bluff in place, not to mention thoroughly intimidating a whole bunch of people.’

Winston chuckled. ‘As your predecessor and I learned during the war, things are never as secure as one likes to imagine. MI6 has a pretty good idea of what you found and what has happened to it all.’

A long sigh came from the US end of the long transatlantic cable. ‘That’s our worst nightmare. Your new socialist government will pass the information straight to Moscow.’

‘That’s partly why I am calling, Harry. I have prevailed upon MI6 to sit on

the information for a while; in fact, until I get back into office or they are sure the information will not be passed directly to the Soviets. They were not unhappy to do so because they distrust our current government as much as I do – and, I have no doubt, yourself.'

'Thank you, Winston. That's a huge relief. I can't tell you how grateful I am. That red Cabinet of yours would sell their own grandmothers to Stalin.'

Churchill coughed as he inhaled too much cigar smoke. When the fit had died down he cleared his throat. 'No, Harry, I have to strongly disagree with you. Not the Cabinet as a whole. A few of them are perfectly loyal to Her Majesty.'

Truman gave a full-throated laugh. 'Faint praise … faint praise. But look, if your people have uncovered things what's next?'

'That was the main reason for my call. If what MI6 has told me is true, then it will not be long before Stalin knows everything that you do. This needs to be buried deeper still. I would hazard a guess that you have your best scientists on the case?'

'Absolutely but they are baffled. We just have … let's say items … in our possession but we really don't know what they are or how they work. I thought we'd done a good job of snowing everyone. What else would you suggest?'

'Ah … well, here in the mother country we tend to ensure complete deniability and top-level secrecy by doing what you have done, adding a few more layers of disinformation and a couple more double-bluffs, but then handing it over to a non-government body which nevertheless is part of the system.'

Truman pondered this for a moment. 'It's easier for you guys. Your old-school system keeps people in a clan no matter where they work. Over here we don't have that.'

‘But you do have your university and fraternity clans – those who attended Yale, Harvard, Princeton, and so on. The loyalty and sense of membership is pretty much the same. If it were me, forgive me for being so forward, Harry, I would set up a committee of some sort composed of the top people but not in their official capacities. The committee would have not the slightest government status and would be given full responsibility for managing the affair. They would also have no official relationship with the Presidency or the Congress or any other agency.’

‘Makes sense Winston. Let me jot that down. Such a group could be financed through the money that never gets audited. The “under-the-bed cash” as I call it. I’ll do some thinking and work up a good code word for the “Roswell” group. Don’t suppose you have any ideas?’

There was that chuckle again. ‘Funny you should ask because I was doing some thinking of my own before I called. You know that I have always loved the cloak and dagger stuff. It always gave me great pleasure working up effective code words during the war. You need something that people would never intuitively connect with an American operation.’

‘Okay Winston but can I move you along here, please. My bed awaits.’

‘Sorry. The fact is that I have always wanted to commemorate the sinking of the Bismark – one of the most important events of my premiership – but that name could never be a US code word. Too many people of German descent in your own halls of power. So, here’s the link. Back in 1922 the UK was given a vessel as war reparations for the previous little misunderstanding. It was a very large German liner called the Bismark. When we put her into service with the White Star Line we renamed her Majestic. So, I suggest you call your Roswell deep-cover group, Majestic.’

‘Thanks Winston. You can be sure I’ll take that under consideration. You have my undying gratitude for helping to keep things under wraps – although

I’m sure you understand that I can never reveal that in public.’

‘Of course, Mr President. Good night and sleep well.’

Chapter 13:

Abductions & Mutilations

That all the people who claim to have been abducted by aliens are crazy does not fit the evidence. State-of-the-art research using fMRIs[65] suggests that identifiable markers in the brain can be located that confirm there is something physical to these events.

John B Alexander, Ph.D; *UFOs: Myths, Conspiracies, and Realities*; St. Martin's Press.

We've spent some time looking at the "normal" side of UFOs. That's an hilarious statement, isn't it? What could ever be said to be "normal" about such a subject? What I mean is that things that fly in the sky or travel in the sea "feel" more normal to us; primarily because we have equivalents here on Earth: aircraft and submarines. UFOs are most certainly part of the paranormal but they are relatively familiar to us these days, their antics are amazing but the fact that our governments discuss them, the US Navy now has a formal reporting process for them, and we have serious scientific outfits investigating them, makes them seem part of the normal world.

But other aspects of the paranormal are much less familiar. They occupy positions farther out on the scale of weirdness. The reason they're in this book is because every single one of them is associated – sometimes very closely – with UFOs.

Aspects of paranormality include abductions of humans by "aliens",

mysterious crop circles, animal mutilations, telepathic communications, some extremely strange creatures, and even alleged “portals”. A lot of credible people have said that they were “abducted” by aliens in weird objects. Crop circles, even though somewhat discredited by fakes, have also been found in areas in which UFO have been spotted. There is quite strong reason to believe that some humans have the ability to “hear” from UFOs and possibly even “talk” to them, and – weirdest of them all – UFOs have been closely associated with situations in which some very strange creatures have been seen by reliable witnesses. Any discussion of the subject of UFOs which does not address the other elements of the paranormal is like a chair without two of its legs – not merely incomplete but useless.

In this Part of the book, therefore, we will be looking at the very weirdest side of the subject. Buckle up and try to stay objective.

We sometimes forget that part of the evidence for the physical reality of mysterious objects consists of numerous, often extremely plausible, accounts of abductions, and the even more numerous accounts of animal mutilations. Hypothetically, if we were to accept that such things really do happen and that they are somehow related to the UFO phenomenon or something associated with it, we’d have to ask why?

Why would aliens (or whoever or whatever inhabits or owns these objects) want to abduct and study humans and kill and carve up animals in such an obvious way? One of the first points to be made here is that, while we have a lot of evidence that humans have been taken by strange creatures and examined, we have no evidence at all, over all these years, of any humans being killed and mutilated. Thousands of humans go missing every year, but no-one has yet made a plausible case for them having been killed and

mutilated by aliens. So why the apparently clear distinction between humans and animals? Humans get abducted and studied, animals get killed and have bits taken away.

There are scores of theories surrounding these questions – ranging from aliens having to check up on their experiment (i.e. Earth and its inhabitants) to highly dubious suggestions that the aliens are perverted sex fiends interested in exploring human genitalia. Animal mutilations are much more difficult to rationalise. We know that thousands of them happen every year, but the fascinating fact is that not a single human has ever been caught and convicted of a type of crime which goes back to at least the 1960s and which takes place in virtually every nation on Earth.

There is an abundance of physical evidence for animal mutilations. The FBI investigated them. Tens of thousands occur in the US every year and proportionate numbers of strangely mutilated animals are found in the UK and other European countries. Most explanations centre on the activities of wild animals or sick humans, but the facts of most of the cases seem to make these explanations implausible in the vast majority.

Even more than conspiracy theories, the issue of abductions causes UFO outsiders the most angst. The neutral is asked to swallow a huge pill in the matter of people being taken away and experimented upon by creatures that are described in great detail as “greys” or “Nordics” or “reptilians”. Even the concept of direct human-alien contact sends people into shock. Most of us simply try to ignore it.

So, yes, I could understand if you wanted to skip this entire section. I know how you feel. The subject is at once fundamentally insane and incredibly moving. But, if you can steel yourself for the journey, there are some fascinating cases which will chip away at your world-view and possibly even make you think in a different way about such matters. It takes a really open

mind, but I can tell you that many of the people who are “abducted” are deserving of our respect, our compassion and most certainly not derision and ridicule.

These days the trend is to discuss people having “experiences” with aliens rather than the mode by which they did so, and the whole issue of direct abductions is usually subsumed within the overall title of “experiencers”. This is because a lot of people allege they have “contact” of one kind or another (occasionally sexual) with what they perceive as aliens, without necessarily being abducted[66].

As you will have gotten used to with the UFOs themselves, there is great variation in the abduction/experiencer arena. At one end of the spectrum stand those who claim to have voluntarily interacted with the beings who pilot the strange craft with which the Earth is supposed to be infested. George Adamski in the United States in the 1950s and 60s, and George King in Britain throughout the post-war period, both claimed that they had had such interactions. These even included alleged friendly visits to other worlds, and first-name friendships with aliens, but they sound like egotistical nonsense these days and very few people have ever tried to say that they have had such experiences in modern times.

At the other end of the spectrum, and I have to say, at the more credible end, are the scores of people who say they have been the subject of cold, clinical and unemotional treatment by aliens. A number of individuals claim to have had multiple such experiences spread over many years. Most abductees recall the events with considerable distress, their experiences bearing more resemblance to physical and sexual abuse than cuddly one-on-ones with happy ETs.

Some abductions have included reports of “sexual” interventions and the implantation of gizmos under the skin. As with the UFOs themselves the first

instinct of the outsider is to laugh nervously and put it all down to over-active imaginations or psychoses. Because it reads like a nightmare the best thing, our minds tell us, is to treat is as such. Make a black joke, laugh, and try to forget it. Things flying around in the sky are one thing, people getting mauled on their own planet by aliens who appear only to be interested in their reproductive organs is just too much.

However, the problem for the outsider is that many of the abduction cases are frighteningly credible and they really test our ability to be open-minded, balanced and to weigh up evidence and testimony without prejudice.

Abductees, argue the sceptics, are simply troubled souls who invent or imagine things for various, mainly psychological, reasons. Because they almost always experience these things by themselves, or with other people who are also involved in the alleged abduction, there is little in the way of independent corroboration, and no way of testing their claims. Rare are the cases where several separate people have witnessed the abduction, and almost non-existent the events in which an independent witness watched part of it but was not involved (see the Travis Walton case). At times abductees have submitted to hypnosis to try to "recover" lost memories but there is a good body of scientific evidence that such hypnosis can actually implant or reinforce imaginary events rather than reveal ones which have been buried deep in the traumatised mind.

The "troubled-souls" theory is incredibly attractive to outsiders. It's a very convenient exit from a very dark room. For the thing about abduction is that, if a single one of any of those scores and scores of stories is true, us outsiders are in a whole heap o' trouble.

With UFOs/UAPs we have a comfortingly scientific problem. They are either natural phenomena of some sort, or objects which come from any one of a number of weird places. But they are "things" and can be handled

mentally in the same frame as other weird things like black holes, quantum mechanics, and dark matter. Lost time and abductions, however, are a whole new ball-game; one in which the mental and emotional stakes are much higher.

As they were for Police Constable Alan Godfrey who, in 1980, saw an object hovering over road near Todmorden in England. Under hypnosis, the police officer said he'd been taken into a UFO and examined. Some in England have tried to show that he must have seen a futuristic home, shaped like a flying saucer. It's true that such an object had been built by a local plastic company (and was used as offices by them for some years). It's also true that it was a mobile structure which could be transported on the back of a truck. But the sceptics conveniently leave out the most telling counter-evidence. There is no evidence that the flying saucer structure was on that particular road late that night and there is no evidence that it could have done what PC Godfrey said it did – carry very bright lights inside, hover over the road, and emit a blinding flash of light.

Alan Godfrey is Britain's Lonnie Zamora – a man who was honest and open about what he saw, who got launched into the publicity cauldron without wishing it, and who suffered terribly in career terms and in being the butt of ridicule for years afterwards. There is some evidence that Godfrey had been "abducted" – fifteen minutes of missing time and some very strange memories which were dredged up later under hypnosis. But Godfrey never claimed that these memories were the absolute truth, he said what he saw, and was honest about his memories which, he admitted, could just have been dreams.

The stakes are high, but the fundamental truth is that, for the vast majority of abductees, their credibility is way beyond question. They seem completely honest in their accounts and their anguish is often heart-rending. The issue, of

course, is whether they are suffering from an honestly-held delusion of one sort or another or whether the events they tell of really happened.

A number of well-qualified scientists have studied abductees closely. They have examined them personally in psychological terms, removed alleged alien artefacts from beneath abductee's skin, subjected them to hypnosis, and carried out genetic and medical tests on them.

Dr John Mack was a tenured Harvard professor of psychiatry (he died in 2004). When he first encountered "abductees" he concluded that they were suffering from psychoses. However, after many years of interviews with experiencers he came to the belief that their experiences were genuine (although he never specifically concluded that aliens were also real). It's an important distinction. Experiencers can truly believe that something happened, without being psychotic. The question then, as now, would be: Is it all in the mind or does something real actually happen?

Mack's study of alleged abductions was a brave venture for a senior professor in one of the world's most prestigious academic institutions. In fact, it got him investigated by a specially-established Harvard committee whose remit and legality are, to this day, subject to question. Mack emerged from the investigation with his character and academic standing free of stain, but the incident goes to show how aggressively the "establishment" can treat anyone who delves into the UFO/alien issue; even someone with the impeccable academic credentials of John Mack.

Mack did not believe that aliens were real, but he did believe that there was a great deal more to the cases of experiencers than merely self-delusion. Amazingly he came to the conclusion that the experiences which people had were caused by some form of higher consciousness breaking through into our world through the minds of certain people. His conclusions were that this consciousness was friendly even though its intrusions upset a good many

people. Remember when re-reading those last two sentences that these incredible conclusions came from a highly respected Harvard professor with an unquestionable academic record.

On the other hand, another experienced researcher in the field, Budd Hopkins (died 2011), believed wholeheartedly that aliens were real, that they were abducting human beings for various purposes, and that those purposes were generally centred on human genetics. From yet another standpoint, Dr David Jacobs argued that UFOs are actually a subsidiary subject – simply the machines in which aliens visited the Earth to carry out their inimical purposes. Jacobs proposed that aliens were bent on world domination (*Secret Life*; 1992).

So, do abductions happen? It is arguably the darkest topic in the UFO encyclopaedia, but one has to say that the evidence is compelling. I would dearly love to say that the subject is total nonsense but there are some pretty convincing cases. Set aside your natural scepticism and very understandable revulsion and read about a few of the most impressive cases.

There is a case known as the Antonio Vilas-Boas case from Brazil in the late 1950s. It's interesting, but most researchers these days believe it to have been a fabrication based on an earlier fictional story which appeared in the Brazilian media. Vilas-Boas claimed to have had sex with a five-foot female who had white hair and bright red under-arm and public hair. One has to keep an open mind but the facts of the case are very different to subsequent abduction accounts and probably had too much of the "Buck Rogers" influence to be true.

The Betty and Barney Hill case, on the other hand, has been mirrored to one extent or another by other abduction events and has numerous aspects which are all-too-credible.

Betty and Barney Hill, 1961

Although there were many claims and counterclaims, the first “big news” abduction case was that of Betty and Barney Hill, who were driving home on a backroad in New Hampshire in 1961. To this day it is perhaps the most researched and discussed case in abduction history. They claimed that they spotted a disc-shaped UFO which approached their car. They stopped, and Barney got out with his binoculars. He and Betty were a bit disturbed that around eleven creatures were watching them from the windows of the object and they got back into the car and tried to drive off.

At that point they said they heard beeping noises and then found themselves some thirty-five miles further down the road. They could not remember travelling that distance. They returned home but, in the following days and weeks, they began to dream about very strange happenings and get snatches of recalled memories which disturbed them.

Some while later a Boston psychiatrist and neurologist, Dr Benjamin Simon, began giving the couple regression hypnosis sessions; all of which were recorded. Simon’s treatment “recovered” two hours of missing time from the Hills’ life on that evening. The descriptions which emerged from their separate sessions were very detailed. Both of them had allegedly been taken aboard the disk-shaped object and given intrusive medical examinations by five-foot tall grey aliens. Betty managed to get a look at a star-map which she later remembered and drew. An amateur astronomer claimed it was of the system Zeta Reticuli (some 39 light years from us).

The first detailed account of the affair appeared in John G Fuller’s book *The Interrupted Journey* (1966). Sceptics have pointed to coincidences between the Hills’ hypnosis sessions and sci-fi TV shows which were aired days before the sessions.

But, whatever one thinks, the Hills always came across as straightforward

people, folks who were genuinely baffled and hurt by what they had gone through. They maintained their stories to the end. There are certainly elements of their stories that could have been drawn from contemporary fiction but there are also intriguing themes which it is difficult to believe people would have made up – particularly for little or no financial recompense.

Betty Andreasson, 1967

The Betty Andreasson case is one of the most bizarre abduction cases on record (as if the others aren't bizarre enough). Briefly stated it involved the eponymous girl plus her father and her children (especially a daughter) in their home in the Massachusetts village of South Ashburnham.

It was January 25, 1967 and the young lady was in the kitchen. Her parents and her children (seven of them) were in the sitting room. Suddenly, at around 6.30pm, the lights flickered and then went out completely.

The family claimed to have seen a red light come into the house followed by some four-foot tall beings wearing uniforms and boots and with a badge on their sleeves, They said the badge had what looked like a bird on it. The creatures did not walk, they floated, and they floated straight through the solid front door. Most of the family were placed into a trance except the father – who seemed to have had a telepathic conversation with one of the creatures, and Betty, who was taken out to what she described as a twenty-foot flying saucer and taken up to a larger "mother ship" in which she was physically examined and where she evidently had some sort of religious experience. She claimed that, because she was worried for her children, the beings released one of her daughters from her trance before eventually leaving and releasing the whole family. Betty had been away from the house for some four hours.

Under later regressive hypnosis Betty revealed that she had been abducted once before, when she was 13 years old. The case has been subjected to much critical investigation, but a major 500-page report came to the conclusion that both Betty and her daughter were sane and that they believed sincerely in what they had experienced.

Betty is a devout Christian and claims that the event was, in effect, a religious experience. I am not qualified to say either way and clearly Betty Andreasson is extremely convinced and is telling what she truly believes is the truth. But a couple of things do not really make sense in the whole story. Why, for example, would beings that can float through the air, and through solid objects, wear boots? And why – if this experience was really a Christian God providing a stimulus for one of his chosen ones – would that God need to physically examine the chosen one and carry out experiments on her? Would He really need to place a whole family in a trance and send little grey men in opera-uniforms to get his information and convey a religious message to one woman?

Travis Walton, 1975

The numbers of reported abduction cases is now pretty astounding. In the United States alone the numbers had reached around 800 by the early-1990s and several researchers believe that global numbers are little short of horrifying – I've seen fairly plausible arguments of numbers up to a million people having been abducted. Some of the cases are a little difficult to believe, others, like that of the Hills and Travis Walton are frighteningly convincing.

The Walton drama took place in Arizona near a town called Heber, which lies in the Apache Sitgreaves National Forest, a bit to the south of the Grand Canyon and to the north of Phoenix. About thirty miles to the east of Heber

lies the town of Snowflake.

On November 5, 1975 a logging crew had set out from Snowflake to work in the Forest near Heber. The crew consisted of seven men and included a twenty-two year old named Travis Walton. When their day's work was done, the crew chief, Mike Rogers, was driving them back to Snowflake when everyone noticed a yellow glow behind a nearby hill. Rogers carried on driving and, after a while, they came across a yellow disc hovering low above a clearing in some trees. Their later statements put the disc at about twenty feet across and eight feet high. As you might expect, Rogers brought the truck to a halt so that they could all get a better look.

Why do we do things? We have all had incidents in our lives where we later wonder what on Earth prompted us to do certain things. We ask a person to marry us and later regret it, we agree to marry someone and later regret it, we decide to take the mountain path and end up breaking a leg, we decide we can cope with that easy-looking swim to the nearest island and need the beach-guards to rescue us, we choose the pretty car and it ends up costings us a fortune. More often than not there simply is no rational explanation. And, that probably sums up Travis Walton's impulse on that November evening.

For an unknown reason, Walton jumped out of the crew-truck and ran towards the hovering object. His mates shouted to him to come back but he ran right on until he was standing directly beneath the disc. Is that bravery or foolishness – or perhaps both? The other men said that, when Walton did this, the disc began to wobble and whine a little. Then, with no warning at all, a greenish light flashed out from the object and struck Walton in the chest. He was flung back several yards and the stunned logging crew – watching his body lying totally still on the ground - thought he'd been killed. They were terrified, they'd just watched one of their number apparently killed by a "ray-gun" of some sort. I don't think anyone could blame them for taking off at

that point.

Naturally they went straight to the police and the subsequent, extensive searches failed to find hide nor hair of the young lad. Understandably, as the days dragged on and there was no sign of Travis Walton, the police began to suspect foul play. The remaining members of the logging crew – Mike Rogers, Ken Peterson, John Goulette, Steve Pierce, Allen Dalis and Dwayne Smith – were subjected to a lie-detector test on November 10th. They were asked all the usual questions, focusing mainly on whether anyone of them had harmed Travis Walton, but also on whether they had seen a UFO. The test cleared the men and confirmed that they did, indeed, believe they had seen a UFO and that none had harmed Travis Walton. It left the local Sheriff, Marlin Gillespie, with a real problem. If there was real UFO and these men had not harmed Walton, what was he to do?

Luckily for him, the worry did not last long. That very night a near hysterical Walton phoned his brother-in-law, Grant Neff. Together with Walton's brother, Duane, he collected the lad from a gas-station phone box between Heber and Snowflake. Walton has passed out in the box. He was cold, starving, totally unshaven, and still in the clothes he been last seen in. He was under the impression that he'd been gone just a couple of hours, but he had memories of strange creatures with big eyes. Author Jerome Clark wrote an account of the Travis Walton affair in his *UFO Encyclopaedia*. He recounts that the young man remembered almost everything of what had happened to him and without hypnosis.

Walton said he remembered waking up on a bed with three small, bald-headed, large-eyed, non-human beings standing over him. The lad said he was annoyed so he got up off the bed and shoved one of the creatures and shouted at the rest. They backed off, signalled him to calm down, and then left the room. Walton said he then wandered around the interior of whatever

thing he was in. His freedom ended when he encountered some normal-sized, human-looking people who forced him onto a table and somehow anaesthetised him. The next thing he knew, he was lying on the ground near the telephone box.

Walton was polygraphed several times. He failed one but passed two others. In common with most abduction stories his case has been subjected to much sceptical criticism. The sceptics' main argument is that the whole thing was a hoax and that Walton made it all up on the basis of a TV show on the Hill's abduction which had been aired a few weeks earlier. It's well worth reading the Jerome Clark account for the detail. The sceptics also find it difficult to convincingly explain the yellow disc, the green flash, Walton being thrown onto the ground, and six other men being fooled into thinking he was dead. Generally, the sceptical arguments have to find ways and reasons for the whole crew being "in on it".

Even the most critical of sceptics would admit, though, that Travis Walton has not had a great life since his ordeal. If the whole thing had been a practical joke, it was a total flop. Walton has been fighting ridicule and disbelief right from the beginning. He's had to endure police attention, polygraph tests, and years of sceptical comments. He wrote a book *Fire in the Sky: The Walton Experience* in 1978, essentially to refute all the sceptics' arguments. A film of the same name was released in 1993 but it was somewhat over sensational when compared to the book and did not do the story any favours. If anything, the film made the whole thing less credible by over-doing some of the scenes.

To this day, Travis Walton sticks to his story. In fact, he refuses to have it called an abduction. He believes that what happened was that he was nearly killed by that blast of light and that the beings on that golden disc saved his life before releasing him back home.

When one considers how much autonomy is now being given to military drones it would not be beyond belief that that object itself had reacted automatically to something so close and that the crew or passengers, or whatever, had then had to try to retrieve a potentially tragic situation. But, as with all abduction cases, one has to read both sides of the debate and make up one's own mind.

Debbie Jordan-Kauble, 1983

Another famous abduction case concerns Debbie Jordan-Kauble of Indianapolis, Indiana (she died in 2014).

In June of 1983 she claimed to have been abducted and impregnated by aliens who came from an egg-shaped object. Later she said the aliens had introduced her to the resulting child. Put in that cold fashion the case sounds distinctly worthy of being placed on the shelf marked "Too Far Out", but there are aspects to it which draw outsiders into the story in spite of their intense scepticism.

Debbie Jordan-Kauble is another who never changed her story, she always came across as sincere and even sceptical of her own experiences. Her accounts were intelligently delivered, giving the listener only what she considered to be the facts. There are a few YouTube videos of Debbie giving accounts to various audiences and they are worth watching to get an idea of her experience, her beliefs, and her credibility.

But there are other intriguing features to the Debbie Jordan Kauble events. Three stand out: The existence of corroborative witnesses, the physical evidence, and one parallel with the Travis Walton case.

In the Jordan-Kauble case, her mother was actually the first person in the household to notice, that night, that something was wrong. She was also the person who (two weeks after the events) admitted to having seen a strange

globe of light in their backyard. Neighbours also came forward to say that they, too, had seen globes of light in the area and in their own backyards.

In an interesting parallel to the Valensole case in France decades earlier (see Volume 1), the back garden was scorched by something and the grass and other plants exhibited weird behaviour for years afterwards (it is not clear whether anything was ever investigated scientifically). Debbie's dog was terrified that night and by all accounts it was never the same again and died of what sounds suspiciously like heavy radiation poisoning.

The parallel with Travis Walton is that Debbie Jordan-Kauble was also struck by a beam of light at the beginning of her experience. To be accurate, it was an extremely bright light and a force which impacted on her chest. Unlike Walton she did not remember getting knocked out but the details of the incident which emerged later seem to indicate that there was considerable lost time. She believed, that night, that the experience had taken fifteen minutes or so. In fact, she had been "away" for some two hours.

Whitley Strieber, 1985

Nineteen-eighty-five, when around 300 cases of abduction had been documented in the United States, was the year of a particularly strange affair concerning a fellow named Whitley Strieber. In December of that year he and his wife and some friends were spending a few days of the festive season up at a cabin in snowy, upstate New York. On the night of the 26th Strieber had what one can only call an extended nightmare. It only came out in later regressive hypnosis that he had apparently experienced a lengthy period of interaction with weird creatures.

The morning afterwards Strieber was unsettled and disturbed. He remembered "seeing" a barn owl looking at him through a window. His friends were just as disturbed because they'd been awoken during the night

by a bright light which had flooded the cabin. Over the following months it seems that Strieber became even more upset and, in the end, he agreed to have regressive hypnotherapy. What that revealed was something which the outsider finds extremely difficult to handle. Strieber evidently encountered small beings with oval heads and big black eyes, and hooded dwarf-like creatures with blue skin. The latter, he revealed, danced with him. It was a lengthy and detailed set of memories which would seem more like a particularly imaginative nightmare than an abduction case if it wasn't for the length of time Strieber was disturbed and the testimony of his friends as to what had happened at the cabin. The little creatures might remind one of the things which infested the house in the Kelly-Hopkinsville case – especially when one considers the "barn owl" which was one of the "explanations" put forward by sceptics after the Kelly-Hopkinsville affair, and the "dancing".

The whole affair leaves one unsettled, primarily because it is so easy to write it off as an hallucination except for the degree to which Strieber required help, the apparent memories extracted only under hypnosis, and the bright light in the night which awoke his friends.

Peter Khoury, 1992

We've looked at some really strange cases in which people claim to have had experiences with alien creatures. They push the boundaries of believability almost to breaking point. But this one is as stunning in this field as the Tic-Tac episode is for the UFO phenomenon as a whole. It combines a salaciously unbelievable sex scene with what could have been the very first DNA study of a non-Earth creature.

An Australian living in Sydney, Peter Khoury was married and worked in the construction industry. He had been injured and was having some time off work. The incident which is the main subject of this section was not his first

experience during July of 1992. On the 12th he'd woken up, after feeing pressure on his ankles, to find a group of beings around his bed – some small and one very tall. He seemed to have received telepathic communication from them about the "last time" but the core of the event was someone inserting a long needle into his head. He evidently blacked out. His wife subsequently found a small puncture mark and some dried blood, but they did nothing else about the incident.

Khoury was alone in bed at 7:30am on July 23, 1992 when suddenly he awoke. He was alert and he immediately sat up. Two humanoid females were sitting on his bed, both were entirely naked. He said they looked human but something about them was not quite normal. One looked somewhat Asian, the other looked perhaps Scandinavian, with blonde hair and light eyes. Both had unusually high cheekbones and very large eyes. Khoury said that there was something very different about them. Even the blonde's long hair was curled in a way he had never seen before. Both females had expressions which were almost entirely free of emotion.

When you are reading this tale, it is as well to bear in mind that it does not take a genius to invent an exciting sexual adventure with alien women that would have the Sunday papers fighting to pay for the serialisation rights. I won't expand on this topic, but I think you will see what I mean when you read the disappointing and slightly sordid events which Peter Khoury said came next.

The blonde woman, sitting in a kneeling position on the bed, reached out with both her hands and cupped the back of the man's head. With some strength she drew his face down and toward her. Khoury resisted, but she pressed his mouth onto her nipple. Who knows why, perhaps just terror, for this was a forced experience. He was confused, probably a bit annoyed at the uninvited intrusion and consequently not aroused in the slightest. So, rather

than a normal reaction to a woman's breast, he bit hard. A small piece of her nipple came away in his mouth. Strangely, the woman did not yell or show any signs of pain. She simply looked at Khoury as though he had disappointed her. Unfortunately, the small fragment became caught in his throat, and he started coughing. As far as Peter Khoury knew at the time, that was the end of it, the two females simply disappeared.

So, it could all have been a dream. Two naked women, one of whom did not feel pain, and both of whom then simply disappeared. Except for that tiny piece of nipple, some lost time, and a couple of hairs.

Afterwards, Khoury tried to clear his throat. He tried water, food and all sorts of other things but the fragment of nipple did not go away. At that point he felt the need to pee and he noted that his penis was sore. On checking he found two strands of blonde hair wrapped very tightly around the head of his penis. It was these that were causing the pain. They took some effort to remove, but eventually he got them off and he immediately put them into a plastic bag and sealed it up.

It took three days for the object in Khoury's throat to go away but he was brave enough to tell his wife of the event, and probably foolish enough to report his experience to others. The hair samples became arguably the first time that DNA examination was performed on a supposedly non-Earth sample.

We are told that the test report (which also tested samples of both Peter's hair and his wife Vivian's) remarked upon how thin and clear the samples were. The labs tested for chemical treatment of the hair, because chemicals are usually what cause hair to thin. But they could find none. The conclusions were that, although the hair was light blonde, it was not, as one might expect, from a light-skinned Caucasian racial type. Instead, they concluded that the hair exhibited five DNA markers that are characteristic of a rare sub-group of

the Chinese racial type.

The scientists then trawled a database of tens of thousands of samples of mitochondrial DNA (the DNA inherited from one's mother – a way of tracing back ancestry through time). Of all of them, only four other people on the database had all five of those markers. All were Chinese, with black hair.

Because mitochondrial DNA is only derived from one's mother, the findings suggested that the blonde had a common ancestor with those four Chinese.

The facts are difficult to explain. Although markers were found which could also be found on Earth (even if only in four people among tens of thousands on the database) the hairs could still have been from someone from this planet. However, assuming for the moment that Peter Khoury fancied some notoriety and made up the whole story with the help of a blonde friend, how do we explain the incredibly rare DNA markers and the fact that they certainly do not belong to fair-haired, fair skinned people?

It is a shame that the piece of the woman's body that Peter Khoury bit off could not, also, have been tested. But we can't have everything.

As with many of these cases, there are things that could be done that seem not to have been. For example, the hair could have been subjected to a standard DNA test. This is more expensive than the mitochondrial tests but would have had the advantage of providing information on the background of the woman's father. For some reason, supposedly financial, this has never been managed, but that really doesn't make sense. UFO groups are not well financed but, for such important evidence, surely two or three of the biggest could have got together and paid for the appropriate tests? The Australian, Bill Chalker wrote an excellent book on the affair called *"Hair of the Alien"* (see Bibliography).

Was it all a dream? That would certainly be the most convenient and least

scary answer. But there is a sense of credibility about this incident that stops most people writing it off in that way. Khoury did not need to subject himself to the ridicule he received from all sides. If he was going to make up a story for fame and fortune, one could think of a dozen ways he could have invented a far more impressive and saleable one. The detail about the nipple was uncomfortable for the reader rather than enticing, but who would make up something like that? And the hair definitely showed some very strange characteristics.

Some UFO theorists have used the findings to support their beliefs that certain aliens may have a common root-stock with humans and that humanity may have been "seeded" on this planet by those alien races. A lot of the evidence of UFOs and abductions could be used to support such a possibility.

I was going to say that stranger things have happened. But, no, that would take the biscuit.

Kelly Cahill, 1993

Sceptics argue that the similarities and resonances between many abduction/experiencer cases is nothing more than one person copying another. The cases are widely publicised and it would be child's play to dress up your own fictitious story with details garnered from previous incidents. The possibility is unarguable. Consequently, every person who "comes out" and tells a story about meeting with, or being abducted by, aliens has to run the gauntlet of suspicion, ridicule and derision. That does not make them right or wrong, but it does make it extremely difficult to get at anything approaching the truth.

Medical science is so advanced these days that we should be able to build a forensic file on each case in the same way that police cases are built for assaults, murders, sexual assaults, and such like. It's expensive, the UFO

organisations point out, but the arena now has access to at least the sort of money that would give us a great deal more information on cases like Peter Khoury, Kelly Cahill, and more recent ones.

“Kelly Cahil” is a pseudonym used by an Australian lady who claimed to have been abducted by aliens back in 1993. She was a mother of three and was 27 at the time. In reality the story involves not merely Kelly Cahill but her husband and several other people in other cars.

It began on August 8, 1993, in an area called Narre Warren North, to the south-east of Melbourne, Victoria. It was early in the morning and the lady, her husband, and their children were driving home from visiting friends. They were on Belgrave-Hallam Road when the two saw what they called a “blimp-shaped” object with a ring of orange-coloured lights and windows. It was hovering near the road. They were amazed but they drove on.

Suddenly they came across a blindingly bright light across the road. Later Kelly remembered that she asked her husband what he was going to do. He replied that he would drive on. She and her husband then experienced a sort of immediate time jump. They were still in the car but were aware that “something” had happened. They both recall feeling relaxed. But, just like Betty and Barny Hill, when the couple got home they realised they had lost around an hour of time. Cahill discovered a triangular mark near her navel and gradually her and her husband remembered what had happened. They recall the object sitting in the air over a nearby field. Kelly said there was at least one other car nearby and that there were lots of beings, in groups, “standing” under the object. The Cahills got out of the car and, feeling quite unafraid at that point, walked towards a small group of beings who drifted quickly towards them, covering about a hundred yards in a few seconds.

The beings were some of the weirdest we have yet heard of. They were tall – around seven feet – thin, and almost entirely black. Cahil described them as

being completely without colour – that is the blackness was not the colour of their skin or clothes but something far deeper and less tangible. They had glowing red eyes[67].

The group of creatures approached, and Kelly became afraid – believing they were "evil". At one point she heard her husband's voice tell the creatures to let go of him and she says that one of the things said that they meant them no harm. Nevertheless, Cahil reports that she remembers being naked on an examination table and one of the black creatures bending over and appearing to investigate her navel. UFO investigators interviewed the people in the other car (they voluntarily came forward) and they told essentially the same story as Kelly Cahill and her husband.

Cahill has written a book on the incident and gives lecture tours, but she has always seemed very open, critical and honest about what she was reporting. She admitted that people would think she was crazy, but she insists that what she experienced actually happened. Independently, the various participants created drawings of the UFO and its crew which were very similar to those of Ms Cahill and there is some reason to believe that two other women reported marks on their bodies similar to those on Cahill's.

Final Thoughts

So what are we to make of all that? There are abduction cases and there are abduction cases. On the internet you'll find scores, from pretty much all over the world – France, Australia, Britain, Canada, the US. Some of the stories are so far-out that it is almost impossible for the outsider to take them seriously. A few, on the other hand, are frighteningly close to being credible. Even more than the UFOs themselves, the cases test our ability to be balanced and objective.

In addition to the paltry seven cases we've had space to briefly address

above, there are some very compelling incidents which add further mystery and darkness to an already frightening subject.

In 1967 Police Sergeant Herbert Schirmer said he came across a UFO hovering over a road in Nebraska. He claimed that he had been abducted by its humanoid occupants. Compare this with the 1980 lost-time encounter of PC Godfrey in England who also came across a UFO hovering over the road and who also claimed to have been abducted and medically examined.

In 1973 Calvin Parker and Charles Hickson said they had been abducted one evening while out fishing on the Pascagoula River in Mississippi. In that case the men claimed to have been taken forcibly by entities who floated their paralysed bodies over the river to a disc-shaped object, conducted various examinations on them and then floated them back to their boat.

In England, in 1987, Jason Andrews – then aged four – had a weird experience. In the midst of a thunderstorm in Kent he began spouting complex maths and wanting to go outside to “them”. In 1995 the lad revealed to his parents that aliens had abducted him from his bed on several occasions. Jason’s story is a harrowing one and, if true - that is, true in the sense that there really are tall and small beings who abduct humans – it is simply terrifying.

All the accounts are difficult to believe but they are only a fraction of the possible extent of the issue. Researchers in this dark and harrowing field believe that, aside from the over 1,000 quite well documented experiencer cases, there are hundreds or even thousands more which go unrecorded. They point to evidence that some abductees are “visited” time and time again and that many never reveal their experiences to the cynical gaze of the wider world. There is also the thought that many experiencers might never report the events because they simply do not remember them.

There’s no way that one could apply a “five percent rule” to abductions. Few have been examined to any genuine extent and those that have, rest essentially on the testimony of an individual. But, if even a small proportion of claimed abductions is genuine, the implications are even more profound than those of UFOs. If we can prove that we are being visited by weird objects it would be of earth-shattering importance. But if it turned out that certain “visitors” are kidnapping humans against their will and conducting medical examinations on them, it not only indicates at least one purpose of the UFOs, but also reveals that that purpose is at the very best unethical, unfeeling and amoral, and at its worst, downright evil.

The sceptics tend to claim that experiencers copy each other and merely restate things contained in previous stories. In the broadest terms this could be so. If “abduction” or medical examinations or sordid sexual encounters are themes then they certainly get repeated very frequently. However, the detail of abduction cases is usually quite different and especially the descriptions of the creatures which are supposed to be behind them. Even in our tiny selection we have encountered four and five feet tall grey beings, tall Nordic types, extremely tall all-black humanoids, small goblin-types, and uniformed creatures that can float through walls. This could simply reflect the amazingly fertile imaginations of the people who report such events, or it might, at the other extreme, result from visits by very different civilisations.

The powerlessness of the victims is a very scary aspect. It opens up the very real possibility that the human race may be a flock of sheep, bred by some unknown civilisation for an unknown purpose. Sheep are not terribly bright animals and that could well be the way we are seen by these “visitors”. We mill around happily on our beautiful world, making a mess of it as we go, blissfully unaware of what awaits us and totally helpless to avoid our fate.

Chapter 14

Crop Circles

Laboratory studies have indicated that the nodes of some of the stalks were blasted out on one side. … the effect has been replicated by highly localized microwave heating. … If something like this caused the formations, then we are clearly talking about a highly sophisticated agency behind the phenomenon.

> Dolan, Richard. *UFOs for the 21st Century Mind: A Fresh Guide to an Ancient Mystery* Richard Dolan Press.

As one of the most contentious subjects in the paranormal world, crop-circles are known to create more frustration and anger on both sides of the argument than almost any other subject including the UFOs themselves. Crop circles are patterns – usually circular but not always – which "appear" in fields without apparent human intervention. The patterns are very clear and precise and sometimes very complex. There is no sign of footprints – even when the circles are a long way from the field boundary but most are found in fields of cultivated crops which have tractor marks (that is the bare tracks left after planting by the tractor's wheels).

There is a little evidence of crop-circles in previous centuries (but see the footnote on BLT Research later) and they have appeared in many countries including Australia, the US, Holland, Switzerland, and many more. But England, for unknown reasons, is the centre of the phenomenon. There

appear to be more, and more complex, crop circles in England than in any other country on Earth.

The sceptics believe it's a no-brainer. Crop circles are just clever hoaxes. One pair of British hoaxers - Doug Bower and David Chorley – claim to have started the whole thing off. They claim to have created up to a thousand such patterns in the fields of dear old Blighty. They admitted what they had done and then, in front of the press, proved they could do a very convincing job. They even fooled a self-professed expert on the subject, who was shown one of their creations and immediately judged it to be authentic. There were plenty of red faces among the crop-circle fraternity after that.

Another pair – a father and son team – claimed to have spent the past fifteen years building at least twenty such circles in and around Wilshire. Interestingly, the father, who designs the incredibly intricate patterns, said that he feels that there is "channelling" involved in his work[68]. Many investigations have now proved that extremely complex crop circles can be formed by human hands. The techniques are well understood and the use of tractor tracks through the crop means that the perpetrators leave almost no trace of how they got to the area in which the crop circles are formed[69].

The creation of crop designs is now a commercial enterprise. Groups of enthusiasts will create whatever you want; from your company's logo to an advertisement for the cheapest rail fares (which was done in Switzerland). Prior to the 2012 Olympics the British authorities had the Olympic circles cut into crops so that they could be seen by passengers arriving at London Heathrow Airport.

The vast majority of crop circles appear during the hours of darkness, almost all are constructed within easy reach of a road, and almost every design is based on circles (not all, but most) which are also, of course, the easiest to make by hand using a pole and rope, plus boards to flatten the crop.

Check out the amazing variety of beautiful circles on a British photographic website. The massed arrays of images go back to 1994[70] and, when compared to those admitted by the Salisbury father and son team, underline the ingenuity of the creators and the hard work which goes into creating them.

Yet, even with the proven hoaxes, there are still some pieces of crop-art which leave the outsider wondering. In August 2017, a very large piece of crop art appeared in a field near Rochford in the British county of Essex. Unusually, this one had long straight lines as part of the pattern. Does that make it more or less likely to be a hoax? The pattern was, however, very complex; it consisted of a radio-mast-like lattice surmounted by a circle-pattern which looked like the sun. It would have taken a long time to construct by hand, and would have been incredibly complicated to plan and implement given that a human hoaxer would have had to work only through the tractor lines and completed sections. It's certainly possible that all of these complex crop-circles could have been manufactured by human hand, but the reader should look some of them up on the internet and decide for him or herself.

A number of people who have visited crop-circles report physical effects ranging from euphoria to nausea but there appears to be little in the way of substantiated evidence to support such reactions apart from the word of the people concerned. Many other people feel nothing at all.

Crop circles now appear all over the world and the chances are that almost all are constructed by clever humans who want to puzzle their compatriots and perhaps gain some notoriety (and cash) when they admit to the press what they have done.

BLT Research in the US has a record of US crop circles going back to 2004 many of which have been researched in some depth. It's an excellent

collection of photos, but even the amateur can see that some show evidence of human construction. This is usually in the form of convenient parts of the pattern which allow another circle or design to be cut without affecting the cleanliness of the whole. Others show fairly simple circles or arcs whose centres are cleverly located well inside an existing circle. BLT conduct scientific work on the crops that have been flattened and have some evidence of abnormalities in the stems and nodes of the growing plants, and some additional evidence of differences in the reaction of the plants from the centre, outwards[71]. But a major part of the problem that the outsider has with crop circles is the question: Why?

Why would some alien beings or an unearthly force create such things? Are they trying to communicate? If so, we cannot crack the code. Are they simply showing off? They must have very fragile egos. And why patterns in crops and grass? What about trying to communicate with parts of the world that don't have arable crops or long grass? So, it's all a hoax? In my humble opinion: 99% hoax. But, as I said above, there are some incredibly puzzling examples.

One of the most famous crop circles in the UK, indeed, across the world, was the "Julia Set" which appeared in broad daylight in a field just across the very busy main road which runs past the ancient monument of Stonehenge. In July 1996 a complex, 900-foot fractal diagram was found in the field. It consisted of 149 circles of varying sizes. One man later claimed that he and two friends had completed the work in three hours the previous night. I invite the reader to take a look at the thing and assess that claim. Simple math means that each circle had to be completed in less than 75 seconds. If a single man took responsibility for one circle it would still have had to be fully completed in less than four minutes. Given the complexity and the coordination required, that is impossible.

The facts surrounding the Julia Set are quite enthralling. It seems that the whole thing appeared in the afternoon of a bright sunny day, within easy view of one of the busiest network routes in the UK, the A303, plus all the visitors to, and the guards at, Stonehenge. Not only that but we can be sure that it appeared in the space of just 45 minutes. A pilot had flown a doctor from Exeter that day and they flew directly over the field, having a good look at Stonehenge on the way. They saw nothing in the field. After dropping his passenger, the pilot returned and, on his second passage across the area, saw the Julia Set fully completed. In the space of far less than an hour between that pilot's first over-flight and his second, the complex Julia Set had been formed – that's an average of one circle per 18 seconds.

For my own part I try to keep an open mind but, based on existing evidence, I would think that the vast majority of crop-circles are just humans having fun. But that doesn't mean that all of them are hoaxes. The problem for researchers, if there are genuinely non-human crop circles, is why and why so many in ye olde England?

You might check out an excellent summary of the subject on the web. It comes with videos of the two "original" hoaxers and of some of the best crop-circles in the UK[72].

Chapter 15

Animal Mutilations

On both animals, the eyes had been carefully removed. Other wounds … were precise, small, and yes, seemingly surgical ... And the tongues had both been taken— cleanly, via perfectly straight incisions, far back in the throat.

A horse like this— a large male, maybe twelve hundred pounds before whatever happened to it— should have contained about four gallons of blood. For whatever reason, this horse had been exsanguinated— either before it was killed, or after.

> Both quotes from: Mezrich, Ben. *The 37th Parallel: The Secret Truth Behind America's UFO Highway*

The subject of animal mutilations is not something for those with weak stomachs or sensitive natures. It is almost always linked to what people say they see in the sky – i.e. UFOs – but there is no absolute proof that the two phenomena are connected.

For those who have never heard of the topic before, it concerns a long history of tens of thousands of domesticated animals being killed and mutilated in an abnormal way. The animals – cows, sheep, deer, horses, goats, dogs, cats, even rabbits - don’t appear to have been killed by normal predators and they aren’t shot and butchered by humans. Instead they seem to

die very quickly and with no apparent shot or stab wounds. Their organs are surgically removed with incredible precision and, often, their blood is completely drained. In most cases the surrounding areas give no clue as to what might have happened – no signs of panicked disturbance, no footprints (either animal or human), and, what is really very strange, no blood splashed around the place.

It can happen to thoroughly domesticated pets just as much as to a bull in a field, one's favourite pony, or just a few cows from a herd out on the pastures. As far as can be told, mutilations normally happen at night (but again not always). The carcasses in all their upsetting reality are found by their owners the next day. In a few cases the killing and mutilation can occur in daylight and in incredibly short time spans.

The reality of mutilations is not in doubt[73]. It happens to thousands of animals a year and in most countries of the world. With no signs of a struggle, it is as though the animals were killed instantaneously or were paralysed before being killed and mutilated. The most common missing parts are genitalia (including internal elements), eyes, ears, tongues, areas around the jaw, and even the rectum and whole sections of connected parts[74]. The surgery is usually extremely exact, the cuts as sharp as those made by a laser, and there is almost always little or no sign of blood loss even from the first cuts. Close examination shows, in some cases, that the flesh has been cauterised as though by a laser. Some vets have testified that scavengers such as foxes, badgers, dogs, coyotes, and wolves avoid the carcases for days after the death. Many owners have also said that their other animals – whether domestic or not – become afraid and agitated after the event, often avoiding the area of the kill completely. Some domestic dogs are said to keep to the house and show signs of severe mental trauma.

The cost to some farmers is ruinous. The issue is not whether it happens,

but how it happens, and who is doing it. The answers to those vital questions are as varied as those to the UFO problem itself. On the more sceptical side of the debate are those who say that all animal deaths that are called “mutilations” are caused either by predators or by humans. On the far side of the subject are those who say they are caused by extra-terrestrials or even by interdimensional creatures.

There is some evidence that mutilations of animals were reported in England in the early seventeenth century. Cattle have certainly been recorded with parts removed through the 1960s and onwards. The most famous early-modern case, the one that may be regarded as “the start” for the purposes of modern research – was that of “Lady”. She was a mare whose owner lived near Alamosa, Colorado. One morning in September 1967 the mare was found dead and mutilated under very strange conditions and, because the story made the local paper and the victim was a much-loved domestic animal, it received global attention.

The three-year old horse was discovered by Agnes King and her son. The damage to the animal was as puzzling as it was distressing. All the skin and flesh had been removed from the horse’s head and neck. The body exhibited numerous precise, clean cuts and there was no blood at all at the scene. There were no tracks in a fair area around the carcase (even of the horse itself) and they found small holes in the ground – as if from a steel rod being pushed hard into it. A couple of nearby bushes had been flattened.

Bigelow’s National Institute of Discovery Science (NIDS) researched mutilations and found that eyes had been taken in 59% of cases, tongues in 42%, the rectum in 76%, and genitals in 85%.

Scores of books have been written on the subject, but three authors stand out as great background for the outsider. One of the most fascinating books on the subject was *Stalking the Herd* by Christopher O'Brien who put

together information from a number of databases to catalogue thousands of reports (from various sources including the media) between 1606 and 2014. Linda Moulton Howe has written three very good books on (and around) the topic, the latest in 2014 (see Bibliography), and *The 37th Parallel – the secret truth behind America's UFO highway* by Ben Mezrich provides a different perspective in the apparent link between strange events and a specific set of geographical locations in the US. If one sets aside the almost manufactured link between UFOs and a line of latitude, his book is a fascinating read and a sobering insight into what these weird events actually mean to real people. Much loved horses found in their fields without eyes and tongues, other animals spooked into barely controlled hysteria. Cows with udders and sexual organs surgically removed. Calves with their eyes removed. Mezrich says that just six western states have experienced over 10,000 mutilation events. Linda Moulton Howe showed an apparent link between animal mutilations and human abduction cases. Many other authors have made the same link.

In the mid-70s Senator Floyd Haskell, pushed for the FBI to investigate, following what he said had been 130 separate mutilations in Colorado and more in neighbouring states. The FBI eventually logged around 8,000 cases in Colorado alone.

Scientific research into the carcases reveals a very mixed story. Some animals have high levels of certain minerals, some have low levels. Some have very strange associated damage. In one case a bull had had its rectum and genitalia removed but the autopsy also found that, while its heart and liver had been left in place, they had been turned into the consistency of peanut butter. Further scientific tests found that the liver was completely devoid of copper but had far too much of other minerals. The scientists could not offer any explanations for the condition of either organ.

There are no definitive statistics, but most animal mutilations appear to have been experienced in the United States. However, as Christopher O'Brien argued, the first evidence of something which may have been the same phenomenon comes from England. The British (as well as people in many other European countries) continue to report many such cases. For the UK the *Animal Pathology Field Unit (APFU)*[75], with almost no resources, looks into various mysterious deaths of animals and many reports note very similar characteristics to those seen in the US: Little or no blood at the scene, apparently surgical excisions, lack of footprints around the carcase, and an absence of signs of panic or attempts to escape by the animal. In one case a lamb had a clean hole, about one-inch in diameter, drilled into its left hip which also took out a similarly precise area of the hip bone[76].

The sceptics' explanations range from everyday predators (many scavengers are known to target the soft flesh of lips, eyes, ears and anus) to military experiments of unknown character, attempts to covertly monitor animal diseases, and, of course, Satanic cults. Many of the animals in Wales – as in England and the US – have been found with the flesh of their faces stripped and their tongues missing.

Mutilations have also been reported in Australia, bearing close similarity to the US and British reports. The British UFO organisation BEAMS has several fairly recent cases documented with photos (again, not for the squeamish) from Cheshire, Leicester, Susses, Wales, Lincolnshire, and several other counties[77].

The stories of animal mutilations are extremely sad. Only the sickest of people could want to treat animals in that way. Having said that, it is not impossible that some of the mutilations are being perpetrated by such people. But thousands of them – very, very similar, in many different countries? The problem for the outsider is that, although predators and very sick humans

could be responsible for some of the reports, the evidence from the authors who have studied the subject, and indeed from the FBI, shows that there is a high proportion that exhibit such strange aspects that they could not have been caused by wild animals or perverted humans. In many cases, for example, the mutilations occur in areas that are a long way from main roads and where the rancher or farmer would easily have spotted anyone who was up to no good. It takes a strong stomach and a firm hold on sanity to research animal mutilations but they do seem to represent a very real anomaly which has some similarities, perhaps in motivation if not in execution, to human abductions, and perhaps even some links to the theories that there are areas of our planet in which the distance between this dimension and others is much less than we would probably wish.

But more on that later.

Chapter 16

Weird UFOs

No, it was something real and substantial; something that kept station with me for eighty miles and only sheared off when I got a radio call from the Sabre-jet fighter which had been sent up from Goose Bay to intercept the thing.

> Captain Howard (BOAC pilot in interview with the British magazine Everybody's Weekly (Dec 11, 1954).

UFOs that appear from nowhere and disappear into thin air, UFOs that dart into clouds and then the whole cloud disappears, objects that appear to change shape or whose shape is indeterminate, lights which merge and separate; all are things that have been reported by numerous witnesses. There are many possible explanations for such characteristics. The apparent "instant appearance or disappearance" could be due to people not seeing the high-speed entrance or departure of the object. People could be seeing an object through clouds or heated air – which would tend to make them indistinct and wavery. When UFOs seem to reduce in size and disappear as a pin-prick, the observer might simply be witnessing an object travelling fast directly away from them. But, "could be" is a "ten-a-penny" phrase. It gets no closer to the truth than a guess and there are some very credible witnesses of very strange UFOs. In 1989, for example, the airline pilot Andrew Danziger, together

with his co-pilot (see description earlier in this Volume), saw an object travel into a cloud and then disappear – along with the cloud. One of the US Navy pilots from VFM-11 in 2015 testified that, on one occasion, his instruments were showing an object but he could not see it.

The outsider needs to keep all potential explanations in mind when reading the examples of weird UFOs that follow.

Labrador, 1954

The Labrador sighting represents one of the best of the early UFO reports. There were multiple witnesses and the length of time during which the objects were seen is impressive. In spite of some very plausible natural explanations, the crew were adamant that the explanations were wrong and that they'd watched a very different phenomenon[78].

We need to set the dial of our time machine to June 29, 1954 – more than sixty years ago. Doris Day, Perry Como and Jo Stafford were in the charts, and Bill Haley had just released his revolutionary chart-hit, *Rock Around the Clock*. It was not yet half-way through the 1950s; people dressed smartly, both men and women still wore hats, and the streets and buildings were free of litter and graffiti. Yet the world was heading down a new and totally unforeseen road as the age of rock and roll and the teenage revolution began.

The immediate post-war feeling of excited anticipation and optimism about the world was fast being replaced by anxiety. Blue skies and a peaceful future world were slowly being replaced by ominously dark clouds. The old world, and that includes the USA, was being challenged by fast developing nations who had seen the old world's weaknesses exposed by World War Two. The Japanese showed that the USA and the great British Empire could be damaged and defeated, and, after the war, that theme was taken up in south-east Asian countries such as Malaya and Vietnam. In Malaya the British were

already fighting what was to be a long and bloody war to defeat the communist insurgents. They eventually succeeded but, in Cambodia and Vietnam, the French were not as successful.

In 1954, French forces had just lost the Battle of Dien Bien Phu and, although President Eisenhower warned against US involvement in Vietnam, the juggernaut was already beginning to gather pace towards deeper American involvement in the region. Blind optimism, driven in part by the US successes during the Second World War, deluded the Americans into believing that nothing was impossible for the most powerful nation on the planet. The "Domino Theory", coming into its irrational heyday, would eventually cost over 50,000 American lives and an estimated total of over 1.5m other deaths.

At the same time, the world's first jet airliner, the De Havilland Comet, was in trouble; one aircraft had tragically broken up over the Mediterranean, killing everyone on board. The Comet had been taken out of service while investigations were made, thus leaving the field clear for the Boeing 707, which took to the air for the first time in July 1954.

That year was also when film stars, rock idols, and businessmen were beginning to fly across the Atlantic rather than take the slower ocean liners like the Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth, and the SS United States. Boeing 377 Stratocruisers had recently entered full service. They weren't terribly reliable but, when they did work, they were the last word in pressurised, air-conditioned, luxury and status[79].

At about 4pm local time on June 29, 1954, at Idlewild, New York, just over fifty of the world's rich and famous were ferried by bus out to their smart BOAC Stratocruiser. With champagne and canapes already placed on their seat trays by smartly-dressed cabin crew, they sat and chattered in restrained whispers as the last pieces of hand luggage were stowed. Others of

the crew were making final arrangements to the passengers' sleeping berths, and yet others were supervising the loading of the last crates of food and drink. Then, with a dull clang, the doors were shut and the sounds from outside were muffled by the revolutionary double-glazed windows. It's a process and an environment which very few modern travellers ever get to experience – end to end, civilised travel.

The peace didn't last long, however, because, within minutes, the engines roared into life. One by one they fired up and the increased noise and the deep bass rumble of four Pratt & Whitney radial engines penetrated even the sound-proofing and the double glazing and shook the passengers with stomach-churning vibrations which would not stop until they reached their destination.

After a short taxi, at about 5pm, the intercom clicked, and the metallic English voice of Captain James Howard announced take off. The throttles were opened on the four huge engines and Flight 510-196 for London began to roll down the main runway at New York's Idlewild International Airport (now JFK).

The Boeing 377 Stratocruiser[80], operated by the British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC), clawed its way into the air. A modern time traveller watching the take-off would have been shocked at the absence of a steep climb after the wheels left the ground. Instead the heavily laden double-decked aircraft gained height very slowly after take-off.

The aircraft in question, named "Centaurus", was on a scheduled flight from New York to London. In most circumstances, it could manage the flight non-stop, but on that occasion, due to the fact that there were only the weakest of following winds across the Atlantic, there was to be a refuelling stop at Goose Bay in Labrador.

The relatively new airfield at Goose Bay was at the extreme north-eastern

tip of Canada. Fly any further and you'd be over the Labrador Sea, next stop Greenland. In those days, Goose Bay was a very important Royal Canadian Air Force base which was also used by the RAF and USAF. It had grown fast, from a wartime requirement in 1941, to become a major military base and an important refuelling stop for transatlantic aircraft (in fact, it is still used by smaller airliners for unscheduled refuelling whenever they encounter particularly severe adverse jet-stream conditions).

The pilot of BOAC flight 510-196 was ex-Squadron Leader James Howard[81]. His first officer was an experienced Canadian wartime pilot – Lee Boyd. They were supported by two flight engineers, two navigators, and a radio operator, plus cabin crew[82]. The fifty-one passengers were part of what the BOAC crews called the "champagne and caviar set" – wealthy enough to be able to afford the high cost of such a flight and impatient enough not to want to spend five or six days on an ocean liner getting to London.

The Centaurus tracked northeast towards Boston and, for a still unknown reason, it was placed in a holding pattern there for a while before being permitted to continue towards the far north of Canada for the scheduled refuelling stop at Goose Bay.

At 1.05am GMT (8pm EST) the passengers had finished dinner and most were getting into their sleeping berths for some hard-earned shut-eye (all that pampering can be very tiring). With the sun almost below the horizon to the left, the aircraft was droning along at 19,000 feet about 150 miles from Goose Bay, having just crossed the coast at Seven Islands (as it was then called) in Quebec province. Above a lower layer of stratus cloud the weather was completely clear.

Almost simultaneously, the two pilots noticed some dark objects on their left-hand side at approximately the same altitude as the BOAC plane and at

an estimated distance of about five miles. Howard joked to Boyd that they looked like flak bursts. However, unlike wartime flak bursts, these objects did not quickly fall behind the aircraft but kept pace for the entire eighteen minutes of the sighting (there is some small reason to believe that the objects moved ahead of the aircraft slightly at one point, but this could well have been a slight yaw caused by the plane's autopilot). Boyd checked, and Goose Bay confirmed, that they had no other aircraft in the area on their screens.

The pilots and crew could see one large object and a number of smaller ones which appeared to change position relative to the larger one. All the objects were dark against the light of the setting sun and the crew did not describe lights. The larger object appeared to change shape during the sighting – at one point looking like an inverted pear, at another like a wedge or arrow, and finally like a telephone handset lying on its back. There were no vapour trails.

Goose Bay diverted a patrolling F-94 jet-fighter to investigate. The fighter was approaching at about 1.20am GMT and the controller allowed it the unusual freedom to talk directly to the Stratocruiser. The BOAC crew vectored the fighter towards the objects, but it was too late. The objects gradually got smaller and disappeared entirely at 1.23am GMT. Neither the fighter nor the ground controllers got anything on their radars except the airliner.

Howard's Stratocruiser landed in Goose Bay at 1.45am and the flight crew were questioned, in the then typical cold-war fashion, by a USAF Intelligence Officer. When they reached London, it was the turn of British Intelligence to conduct detailed interviews prior to letting the crew loose on the massed ranks of the press.

None of the crew called these objects "saucers" and all were pretty neutral about the incident. They did, however, fight their corner in the face of any

proposed explanation which they felt did not fit the facts.

Four possible explanations were on the table within days of the event. They were:

> *A flock of birds. The theory was that the objects could have been flocks of starlings in those beautifully tight swirls and balls that starlings create. At the time this was dismissed as being farcical – a flock of birds at 19,000 feet and travelling fast enough to keep up with an aircraft doing 238 knots? The more recent NARCAP study looked at this again in the light of more modern understandings that birds can and do fly at considerable altitudes. However, the explanation is still regarded as highly unlikely due to the length of the sighting and the apparent speed of the objects.*
>
> *A reflection from the aircraft itself. The Daily Express proposed this solution at the time, suggesting that a temperature inversion had occurred which reflected the aircraft back to its occupants. But the crew felt it was unlikely and the NARCAP study thought it implausible.*
>
> *A weather, or similar, balloon. This was mooted but not really considered at the time and NARCAP discarded it as having too many issues to be plausible, not the least of which was the fact that it would have had to keep pace with the aircraft and that the crew also reported smaller objects as well as the larger one. There's also the consideration that weather balloons are highly recognisable, do not change shape, and are always rising (they*

do not travel at speed horizontally).

A mirage. The crew were adamant that what they saw could not have been a mirage, but the NARCAP study found other similar examples and concluded that this was the "least implausible" answer to the event. It was also the explanation put forward at the time by the famous science fiction writer Arthur C Clarke who was, coincidentally, in the same area at the same time.

Both of the Stratocruiser's pilots said that what they had seen had been solid objects, not the hazy outlines of a mirage. In the *Daily Express*, Lee Boyd, the First Officer, said

I am willing to swear that what we saw was something solid, something manoeuvrable, and something that was being controlled intelligently.

Captain Howard said several times in several interviews "*I'm quite sure that it was a three-dimensional object and not a mirage.*" In late 1954 Captain Howard gave an interview to the British magazine *Everybody's Weekly* (Dec 11, 1954). In that article he repeats his certainty

No, it was something real and substantial; something that kept station with me for eighty miles and only sheared off when I got a radio call from the Sabre-jet fighter which had been sent up from Goose Bay to intercept the thing.

Having said all that, the outsider should take a good look at the

NARCAP study which is set out on Martin Shough's website. In common with most of what NARCAP produces it is very carefully executed, extremely detailed, and looks at all the possible explanations in scientific terms before saying:

> *In conclusion, a couple of awkward issues remain that keep the mirage theory from being completely resolved; nevertheless, several significant objections have been overcome and so many features are suggestive of mirage that it seems by far the least implausible explanation, bearing in mind the limitations of the available data. There is evidence that the observation is one of a hitherto unrecognised class of very similar mirage observations from aircraft which would repay further focused study.*

There is a video of such a mirage effect on the Project 1947 website which shows the way in which a single "object" can appear to be flanked by smaller ones which "move" and "rejoin" the larger one[83]. One can see the way that the NARCAP argument would have worked – a layer or duct of air transmitting perhaps cloud tops or mountain tops over many miles. But a massive doubt remains in the outsider's mind. Would two highly experienced pilots and their crew really be fooled by such hazy and indistinct formations of cloud-like images into thinking that they were solid objects under intelligent control? Don't forget that the two pilots and possibly a high proportion of the flight crew flew through the Second World War. They knew what solid objects looked like because their lives depended on their skill at distinguishing a mirage from an Me109, an Fw190, or an Me262. Don't forget also, those professionals – among several others – watched the objects for no less than eighteen minutes.

There's no doubt that, as Martin Shough states, the sighting could well have been a mirage[84]. But such an explanation, as Shough himself admits, is still dogged by "awkward issues" and one is left wondering why ten professional people would carry on insisting that the objects, whatever they were, were real and solid when even an amateur like me would have spotted the hazy, wavering outlines of a mirage as illustrated in the Project1947 film clip.

The unspoken corollary to the NARCAP report is one that undermines many such efforts. In this case the witnesses were many and highly experienced and they watched the objects for a full eighteen minutes. Why do we not believe that the witnesses could in fact be right – that the objects were solid and like nothing they'd ever seen before?

RAF Lyneham, 1994-5

UFOs are said to appear and disappear, to "fade", and to change shape. But they are also often reported as merging into a single object. A witness from the Pacific northwest of the USA recently watched a largish light in the night sky merge with another smaller light, do some very specific manoeuvres, and then disappear. It's something one hears about all the time and from very experienced observers. In his own words (from a position in a backyard, with another person):

> *I happened to look up and saw a white light/object moving from west to east and very high up (seemed to be anyway). If I hold my hand straight up and away, the object would have been about 1/8th of an inch or so wide. Much bigger than any star. Once again it appeared to be that weird, "confined" light. I immediately shouted "look at that" and pointed at it. [His companion, who is a life-long UFO-sceptic] looked*

up and didn't say anything, but he was watching. He saw it. The light approached a smaller, less well-defined white light that looked like a big star. My first thought was "satellite", but the moving object seemed too big for that. Then it slowed down and seemed to merge with the smaller light, then they both changed direction to the south and poof, they disappeared.

Similarly, single objects are frequently reported as bursting into many separate ones. In these cases, the separate objects usually dart off in different directions.

This particular case is based on a letter sent to the British MoD by a retired RAF Flight Lieutenant (equivalent to Captain USAF) who, at the time, was working in the radar facility at RAF Lyneham in Wiltshire[85]. It rates highly in terms of credibility not just because the officer was so obviously cynical about UFOs but that he waited many years to report the matter. The case involves an object being sighted on two separate radar screens and visually by two separate external witnesses.

In those days, Lyneham was a major transport and logistics base flying C-130 Hercules aircraft (it has since been closed as a primary RAF facility and is now a defence training base).

The letter was sent a decade or so after the event, so the exact date is unknown. The writer could not remember exactly but thought it must have been December 1994 or 1995. The interesting thing for the outsider is that, in spite of his scepticism ("*I must stress that I am one of the worlds (sic) biggest sceptics when it comes to UFOs")*, he'd reached a point where he had to get it off his chest. He admits that he cannot explain what happened.

If something strange happens when you are out and about, the most likely thing you do is to consider it and try to find rational, prosaic reasons for it.

You may even discuss it with friends. If you are an intelligent person, that questioning process generally leads in one of two possible directions: you either find an explanation which convinces you sufficiently for you to drop the whole thing, or you don't.

A similar thing must have happened to Police Constable Kettle of Peterborough in 1909. He saw something extremely strange and did not report it officially until such time as he had given the matter extensive thought, had spoken to friends, and had read of similar incidents in nearby towns and cities in the weeks that followed.

This is standard human thinking and the fact that, in this case, this officer could not get it out of his mind and could not convince himself of a prosaic explanation over a period of ten years, gives the event significant weight.

The Flight Lieutenant had had twenty years' experience with radar and was well versed in identifying anomalous signals from such things as weather and birds and in using the latest "Moving Target Indication" (MTI) systems. MTI was a technique by which operators could filter-out non-moving targets or – in more modern systems – select particular top and bottom thresholds of speeds within which to view targets[86].

On the night in question the officer was supervising the night shift in the approach control room and was guiding two C-130s back to Lyneham. Suddenly he noticed on the screen what he called a stationary "blob". It was on the runway's extended centre-line about 3 miles out – directly in the path of the approaching aircaft. Puzzled, he took the safest course and guided the C-130s around the "blob", handed them over to the visual approach controllers, and then went upstairs to the visual control room. The blob – whatever it was – was also showing up on a close-range radar – the Distance from Touchdown Indicator (DFTI). He could not see anything out of the upper control room and returned to his radar room where he was just in time

to watch as the blob “burst”. He said that, on the radar screen, fragments shot off in many directions at “massive speed”.

Later he received a call from an agitated airman who was on guard duty. The airman said he thought that air traffic control should know that he had just seen a large light burst into bits, each of which flew off at fantastic speeds in all directions. He told our Flight Lieutenant that he’d never seen anything move so fast. Minutes later a second airman from a different location phoned and told him the same story.

The details were logged and forwarded to the MoD UFO desk.

We cannot know what the object seen on two radar screens and by two visual witnesses was, but we do know that the Flight Lieutenant had a sense of humour. When the airman reported that he’d seen a light in the sky, the officer replied that he knew it was almost Christmas, but that he very much doubted they’d find three wise men and a virgin at Lyneham.

San Francisco, 2004

I’ve always stressed the visual acuity of civil airline pilots as being something we all need to keep in mind when evaluating sightings, and this example demonstrates that point beautifully. For two minutes, two experienced pilots (one had fourteen years’ in the air) watched a star-sized object in the night sky change colour, move in different directions, stop and then disappear. It sounds almost trivial when written down like that, but the experience left the two highly-trained pilots “awed”. The report said that they had never seen anything like it before.

It was around 11pm at night on November 3, 2004 and a civil airliner was approaching San Francisco from the east. The two pilots had been given permission to descend from 35,000 feet to 24,000 feet and they were in the middle of that descent. The weather was clear above clouds which had

brought light rain to the Golden Gate area. The moon was behind the aircraft.

At that point the two pilots saw what, at first, they thought was a planet or star glowing orange above them in the sky ahead. It was about the same size as the stars and planets as they appear in the night sky. They watched as it changed colour from orange to white, thinking perhaps that some local atmospheric condition had caused the colour change.

But then it began to move, travelling in a north-easterly direction. The reporting pilot at first suspected that the movement may have been merely apparent, caused by small autopilot adjustments, so they used a group of stars for reference and continued watching. Sure enough, the object was really moving.

The report said that it moved around 30 degrees from the crew's point of view (not something that could be explained by variations in the plane's course or by atmospheric effects on a star). If you hold one arm straight out in front of you and the other arm pointing exactly sideways from the shoulder you are describing 90 degrees between the two arms. The pilots were saying the object moved about a third of that distance across their field of view. It then stopped and took a different direction, still to the right, for about another 20 degrees. It halted again and turned once more to the right before moving another 10 degrees, where it stopped again and promptly disappeared.

The incident has none of the drama of Kenneth Arnold's sighting in 1947, none of the scariness of many other airline close encounters, but in many ways this sort of observation is just as compelling and convincing. The pilots did not report "flying saucers" or little green men, they simply reported a light which moved and behaved so strangely in the night sky that they were "awed".

They knew that they had not watched a star, a satellite, a meteor, or another aircraft or, indeed, any other natural or human object. They were watching

something for which they had no previous reference-point, no comparison, no equal.

Like those two pilots, we do not know what that light was, but we do know that it was not explicable within our current understanding of science and technology. We also wonder how it had the ability to disappear.

Kingston, Ontario, 2007

This is a fairly straightforward case which I've included because it demonstrates the difficulty one has with "shape-changing" reports. Over the years a huge number of people have said that they have watched unidentified objects changing shape in the sky above them (yet another characteristic one would tend to keep to oneself if credibility was what you desired). A disc can change its apparent shape to an ellipse or a circle depending on its angle to the observer, a cylinder can look like a circle if presented end on or a stick if in plan view, a "fat" disc with domes on top and below can seem to be a blimp-shape when seen sideways on, and more complex shapes can also appear very differently if they change their angle of presentation.

But. some "shape-changing" sightings are very difficult to explain. This particular incident in 2007 illustrates some of the very strange problems with them.

A couple were driving home on the evening of June 29, 2007. It was about ten past nine and they were driving down Taylor Kidd Boulevard and then Centennial Drive in Kingston, Ontario. The first led them out of the city centre roughly westbound, and the second, a southbound leg towards an arm of Lake Ontario.

While driving, they saw a disc-shaped, bright orange object. They said it was like two plates, one inverted on top of the other and each with what they called a "flat, bumpy bottom". They initially thought it was a cloud

illuminated by the sun, but the couple soon realised that none of the other clouds in the sky were that colour. The object was either stationary or might have been travelling slowly in the same direction as their car so that it appeared to be in a fixed spot. They lost sight of it for about half a minute and when they regained contact the shape was an oval, almost egg-shaped. It then faded in what the husband said was “an amazing way”. It went from an egg to a small egg and then smoothly to an orange dot. Then it completely disappeared, all within about four seconds.

The questions for the outsider are, I suppose: Was it an object which actually changed its shape, or did it simply change its aspect to the observers? And: What was behind the disappearing act?

There are a number of reports which point to disc-shaped UFOs, tilting and then standing on end before they travel away or disappear. Is this what happened in Kingston on that summer’s day in 2007, or was it something weirder, something which genuinely began as a flat-ish disk but ended up as an egg and an orange sphere? The other notable aspect of the case is that the witnesses said that it “faded”, not that it “went off into the distance” as one might expect.

Bristol, 2009

Near Bristol, England, on September 24, 2009, for ten minutes from 9.55pm a retired RAF engineer and his wife watched fifteen to twenty bright orange lights travelling across the sky. They were, the engineer said, going from southwest to northeast in a perfectly straight line about half a mile apart. He estimated them to be at about 20,000 feet and said they kept a precise distance between them until, suddenly, the leading light stopped dead in its tracks. The second in line came up relatively close to the first and also stopped. These two lights then faded and disappeared before being replaced

by the third and fourth in line. These two also faded and disappeared. And that process was followed until all the lights had disappeared in exactly the same area of sky.

During the course of this parade, the RAF engineer said that an airliner flew across at about 15,000 feet from east to west. He wondered whether the crew had seen the same thing but, of course, no-one ever followed it up. Not that we know of anyway.

This observation is fascinating for several reasons, not least that it describes yet another example of “orange lights”, but also for the strange way the objects – whatever they were – disappeared. They went to a specific area in the sky, halted in pairs quite close together (from a ground perspective), and then disappeared. The next pair then did the same thing and so on until all of the lights had faded into nothing. Were the pairs of orange lights simply shooting off so fast that the observer could not see their motion? If so, why did they not simply disappear as individuals from their places in the spaced-out line? Why did they require a specific area of the night sky, why did they need to stop, and why did they only disappear in pairs?

Orange lights in large numbers have been reported all over the world. I have a growing collection of reports which I call the “Orange Lights Parades”. Usually people just see them travelling across the sky. Some see quite large numbers at a time. Occasionally we get an intriguing report which describes an orange light becoming an object – usually disc-shaped. But the report we’ve just discussed picked up one of the less well-known aspects of some of the orange-light parades – the weird fact that they disappear in a specific area of the sky.

Was there some sort of portal in space in that specific segment of sky which would only take two of the lighted objects at a time?

Payson, Utah, 2012

A few years later, a very similar object was seen in the town of Payson, Utah, which lies to the south of Salt Lake City in a farm belt between rows of towering mountains. Except, this time, it was closer to the witnesses.

At about 6.20pm local time two people saw a bright fireball-type object which had an orange centre, a yellowish layer around it and a red outer perimeter. It flew over their heads in a north or northeast direction until the light appeared to “go out”. They had the distinct impression that the light went out just before the object itself disappeared; an unusual observation.

But, if that was unusual, what followed was downright mind-bending. They said the object flew over them and went north and disappeared but that it – or something pretty similar – appeared again just to their south. From that position it did exactly the same as the first object. The object – or objects – flew over their heads in exactly the same manner three or four times before the approximately twelve-minute sighting was complete.

The extremely observant witnesses reported that the objects were not as bright from the rear and that the circles of light appeared to be more distinct and “spaced out”. Also, from the rear, as they were headed away from the witnesses, the lights flashed off occasionally – flashing to a red or orange colour.

Again, I have to point out the calm detail and close observation of the witnesses. There was no money for them in reporting the events to a UFO organisation. They’d simply seen something so far out of their normal experience that they made the report and accompanied it with the sort of detail that was inherently unbelievable. The objects themselves were incredible enough but, if the witnesses wanted to be believed, they would not add the additional information that the light appeared to go out just before the object disappeared, that the light was dimmer from one angle than another,

and that it occasionally flashed (that is, not constant flashing but just occasionally).

If, for a moment, one accepts this observation as fact (and why not), we would have to wonder where the objects disappeared to. We humans have no idea how to do this trick, but scores of observations of such things would seem to indicate that we should certainly take them seriously and start investigating.

Chapter 17

Feelings & Dimensions

He felt this way whenever the phenomenon was close by. It manifested itself as an unaccountable feeling of oppression, a feeling that someone or something was watching, waiting to act.

> Kelleher, Colm A; *Hunt for the Skinwalker: Science Confronts the Unexplained at a Remote Ranch in Utah*.

As well as the shock of seeing something so strange, I vividly recall the feeling I got as it changed direction towards me; the initial elation that my subconscious appeal had been heard, quickly followed by fear as to what the thing might intend. No sooner was I aware of my fear than the thing turned and darted out of sight.

> Anonymous contributor to the Outsider's Guide Facebook page; 2019

The last chapter described some very strange UFO sightings, culminating in ones which seem to hint at the ability to transit space, time or dimensions. This is "paranormality" at its most profound and even twenty years ago we'd probably have laughed the events off as utterly impossible. Coming into the third decade of the twenty-first century, however, we are beginning to suspect that such things are not only possible but are actually quite probable. Every year that now passes sees us learn more about the quantum world and about

the vast field of dark-matter and zero-point energy which surrounds us but which cannot be seen, felt, touched or measured by our current science. We also learn more about the potential in human beings for such things as telepathy, prescience, and premeditation. Although written-off by many, the US and UK governments have both experimented with remote viewing – ostensibly without much success. We are told that the experiments were abandoned because the results were not reliable.

Yet a huge number of people around the world – and a good many scientists – are certain that humans possess psi abilities and that the only reason they are not "reliable" is simply because we have yet to fully develop them. What would it take to convince us that psi abilities are genuine? In true scientific terms it would require replication by experiments conducted under similar circumstances. If subject A can predict the next card to be drawn with a likelihood greater than that of pure chance, we want subjects B to Z to do exactly the same thing. The assumption is that everyone will possess psi abilities to the same degree, but this is plain nonsense. It is akin to expecting all humans to be able to run the 100m dash in 9.57 seconds just because Usain Bolt can do it.

Humans are individually unique. We possess differing levels of visual acuity and colour-perception, and the same applies to our other senses. It would therefore seem very likely that any psi ability will be spread very unevenly across the human race. The difference, of course, is that, whereas we have had centuries to probe the reasons for different abilities in vision, smell, hearing, taste and touch, we have never really taken psi ability seriously enough to understand how and why it might work and the reasons it might differ between individuals.

To the sceptic, the word "Feelings" is simply a synonym for "Fraud". Feelings are insubstantial and impermanent. We enter a room and get a

feeling of it being warm and welcoming … why? We are shown around a potential new home and reject it because we get a feeling of "sadness". The sceptics would say that these feelings are totally due to sensory feedback in the form of visual, auditory and olfactory inputs. This may be the case but how can we be certain? There are many who swear to having entered buildings and rooms and "known" somehow that something bad happened there, or that they are intrinsically "happy" places.

Since the early nineteenth century people have conducted experiments on psi abilities. Some were patent hoaxes but others were serious attempts to see whether psi abilities actually exist. In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries science has conducted scores more such experiments. You'd be amazed at how many show evidence of the existence of some form of psi ability in human beings.

The abilities which most of us discount, without even glancing at the cases or bothering to consider the larger body of evidence, have been thoroughly examined against probably the most stringent of tests – that of statistical significance. Take a reasonable number of results from a wide variety of experiments and see whether the outcome is "statistically significant" – whether it would have arisen from pure chance or whether it is a meaningful result. Statistics does not say what causes things and it certainly does not show that any particular form of psi is present or not. What it does show is whether one would get certain results by chance.

Professor Jessica Utts[87], chair of the statistics department at the University of California, Irvine has, as an expert statistician, done a lot of work in the psi field. Part of that work was spent under contract to the US Federal government looking into whether psi abilities could be used in intelligence work. Dean Radin, in his 2018 book, *Real Magic*, quotes her as saying that the statistical evidence for precognition, and perhaps other psi

phenomena, is quite strong. So strong, she says, that, if it applied to almost any other phenomenon, it would be fully accepted.

Radin goes on to discuss eight different psi experiments which have been tested in different labs multiple times over the years, The results of six of them show that the probability of getting the psi-positive results by chance are less than one in a billion (in one case – one in a trillion)[88]. Six out of the eight important scientific studies show that psi abilities are real. All of which should give us pause if we should be tempted to dismiss those who say they get "feelings" from UFOs or that "aliens" communicate with them telepathically.

The fact is that, over the years, we have lost count of the number of witnesses who have reported "feelings" when they see UFOs. Many also say that the objects or lights seemed to react to their own unspoken wishes. If they wanted the UFO to come nearer it might whiz towards them. The resulting fear and panic would then send the UFO away again (as happened to the person whose quote precedes this chapter).

The topic also has strong links with forms of psychic contact in other paranormal contexts. The more I have researched the subject of psi powers, the more firmly I have come to believe that the UFO topic should not be treated as a distinct and separate subject. Tens of thousands of UFO enthusiasts out there may disagree. I am well aware that many get very scared and upset when people start speaking of telepathy in the same breath as they discuss UFOs but why can't the rest of the "paranormal" – telepathy, remote viewing, ghosts, psychics, levitation and so on – possess commonalities and links, however tenuous they may be, with what we call unidentified aerial phenomena? There is certainly little doubt that psychic forces seem to be involved in many UFO reports and that areas of intense UFO activity sometimes seem to be areas of powerful psychic forces.

I can understand the unwillingness of UFO enthusiasts to travel down this road. It introduces even more weirdness and reduces even further the chances of anyone actually believing them. But, just because something is inconvenient doesn't mean we have the right to avoid it. In fact, quite the contrary, we should keep our minds open to any and all possibilities and recognise that, by considering other phenomena, we may gain valuable clues and insights to the main issue of UFOs.

Some examples might help to show how interconnected psychic powers and UFOs might be.

Washington, 1952

As early as 1952 we have accounts of strange connections between humans and unidentified objects. In that year, during the famous Washington DC UFO wave strange objects were seen over the capital city by hundreds – if not thousands of people. Civil aircrew coming into and out of what was then Washington National Airport saw them, and military jets chased them. The incident is described in some detail in Volume 1 as is the shameful treatment of two of the main witnesses.

But, in the current context, we need to consider the way in which the unidentified objects were seen to "disappear" as soon as military aircraft came onto the scene and then re-appear again when they left to refuel. The senior air traffic controller at Washington National airport, Harry Barnes, testified that he was sure that his radio directions to guide aircraft onto suspected UFO contacts on the radar screens were somehow acted upon by the objects.

Don't forget that Mr Barnes was standing looking over the shoulder of radar operators in the control tower. He was watching the unidentified blips in real time and could also see the blips of US fighter aircraft. No sooner did

Harry Barnes give a vector to a possible target than the target would either disappear or scoot off to another location. This, of course, might not be some form of thought-transference, it could simply be that the objects intercepted Barnes' radio transmissions. On the surface it looks like the simplest and most logical of possibilities but that would also imply the objects had a complete understanding of the English language and aviation protocols.

If this were the only example of thoughts being "picked up" by UFOs, or some form of message being passed from the UFO or an alleged alien being to the observer, we'd discard it as a simple radio intercept.

But it's not the only time this has appeared to happen. Numerous "experiencers" testify to feeling that they'd received communications from their abductors. In almost all cases this took the form of telepathic messages telling them that the beings "meant them no harm". The Harry Barnes experience is also not a million miles from what appeared to happen during the scientific study of UFOs which went by the name of Operation Twinkle. This is described in more detail in Volume 1 but it involved a 1950s US Air Force scheme to film or track UFOs using a range of scientific instruments. As soon as the USAF set up their instruments (in multiple locations) very few UFOs ever appeared. And this phenomenon was repeated almost fifty years later at the Skinwalker Ranch. There'd been multiple sightings of very weird things, but when the Bigelow organisation set up a scientific study complete with multiple instrument sites and backed by trained scientists, the apparitions and objects seemed to know and to move to places without instruments. They did not seem to mind if human scientists saw them, they just had an apparent aversion to being recorded by cameras and scientific instruments.

The sceptics have a field day with all these apparent incidents. Most certainly there are quite a few possible explanations. The UFOs were never

there in the first place is probably the strongest. But these two examples are not isolated and both involved numerous independent witnesses. The Washington DC sightings went on for days and the USAF took them seriously enough to send up fighters to intercept the objects. And for that to happen you can be sure that the Air Force must have painted multiple objects on their own radars – independently of the screens at Washington National Airport. Getting on for seventy years later the US Air Force was still sending up fighters to investigate UAPs as we are now invited to call them. In 2019 F-15s were launched to investigate a very strange contact over Oregon (see Chapter 10) which somehow then disappeared from radar.

Fifty years apart, multiple UFOs and strange things were seen at three US locations – New Mexico, Washington DC, and in the depths of Utah. On each occasion, steps were taken to track and monitor the objects and on each occasion the objects seemed to "know" that they were being tracked and to avoid or minimise the impact of the investigations.

Utah, 1966

Utah is, today, well known for the events at the Skinwalker Ranch. But the State has as long and rich a history of UFO sightings as anywhere else in the US. Frank Salisbury wrote a very balanced and interesting book about UFO sightings in one area of Utah – the Uintah Basin. In more recent times it provided basic background reading for the people involved in the famous Skinwalker study which we will look at later. Salisbury's book is crammed with detailed cases and considered evaluations, some of which mention the stranger side of the events – especially the feelings that people get when seeing objects.

For example, in September 1966 the Haslem family were driving home. Verl Haslem, was an assistant bank manager in the town of Roosevelt. They

were almost there when they saw an orange globe hovering in the sky above their home. Naturally they were a bit worried and Haslem accelerated. As they got closer, the object moved away, and someone said, “Look, it’s a UFO.”

At that moment the light “went out” and Mrs Haslem said that she got the very strong impression that the UFO was locked onto the humans’ conversation in the car[89]. This sort of impression – that of a link of some sort between human observers and strange objects and events – is by no means unusual, but Mr Salisbury also picked up two other fascinating aspects from the very intelligent and precise observations of the Halsem family all those years ago in 1966.

The first concerns the subject of lights. The family saw a glowing orange object (these are sometimes described by witnesses as “fireballs”). When the light was seen to go out however, it did so in a strange way. Mr Haslem testified that the light did not simply disappear instantly as would a domestic lightbulb. Instead it went out by going from orange to yellow to blue to grey – finally revealing what they said was a solid object for a second or so. Then the lights came back on again in the reverse order of colours. Some people, from a greater distance, might have reported this sequence as “fading”. Yet another compelling description of the weird ways in which colours and UFOs are connected.

The second fascinating element was the way in which the object departed. The Haslems said that it shot straight up into the sky and disappeared into the heavens. Now, that description can be read in reports from thousands of UFO witnesses but the Haslems also added some weird details. They told Frank Salisbury that the object went from a standstill to extremely high speed instantly (compare that with the descriptions of how UFOs move as provided by US Navy pilots in 2004 and 2015. There was no period of acceleration

such as you would see in a rocket. They said it left a visible trail in the sky – "like a meteor in reverse".

To some modern readers Salisbury's book may seem simply an historical treasure. This would be a mistaken judgement. The author was not a starry-eyed UFO geek but a man who, in spite of all the scepticism around the subject, wanted to set the facts down without embellishment or drama. It is down-to-earth and, from the sheer numbers of forthright testimonies, extremely convincing.

Hudson Valley, 1982

The renowned J Allen Hynek and his team made a very detailed study of the thousands of sightings made during the Hudson Valley wave in the 1980s. The resulting report "*Night Siege: The Hudson Valley UFO Sightings*" contains a number of compelling reports involving "feelings". It's worth noting, yet again, that the witnesses were not seeking publicity and were only too willing to stress their bafflement and fear during the episodes.

One example concerns a warehouseman named Edwin Hansen who, in December 1982, was driving home to Kent, New York. At one point in his drive he came across several cars pulled-over to the side of the road and saw a light circling over the road ahead. He watched as the light shot a beam of white light onto the road below and began approaching Hansen's vehicle. Quite understandably, he got a bit scared by the light and its beam. He knew it wasn't a helicopter because it made no noise at all. You can almost hear the spooky background music as the beam slowly approached his vehicle. Hansen got even more frightened and began blowing the car's horn rapidly, thinking that might scare the object away. But it kept coming. He got so scared he shouted at the object – begging it not to come any nearer.

He told Hynek's investigators that – against all his instincts – he felt some

sort of communication and thought he heard a voice telling him not to be afraid. Then, suddenly, the beam was extinguished, and the object sped away. And, you will not be surprised to hear, so did Hansen!

Kent, New York, 1983

In the following year, on a dark and cold February night, and in the same area of New York State, a lady named Monique O'Driscoll and her daughter spotted and followed a well-lit object towards an ice-covered White Pond, near Kent, New York.

As it came to a hover over the pond, the pair were intrigued by what it could be. They saw flashing blue, red and amber lights and watched through the trees for a while before it began moving slowly away from them. Ms O'Driscoll said she was disappointed and wanted the object to stay. She didn't say anything but said she thought "please don't go, I want to look at you some more".

At that moment the object turned and began approaching her but only after she'd asked it to in her mind.

The brightly lit object was now floating directly towards their car and both women got frightened. Monique decided that she did not want it to come any closer. Suddenly the object turned once more and backed off again. One has to say that a single apparent connection between what a human was thinking, and the actions of a UFO, could well be a simple coincidence. But two occasions in the same sighting?

The episode involved much more action and is well worth reading in detail in *Night Siege* (which is a great book but extremely detailed and best taken in short chunks). It contains several, equally persuasive, accounts which seem to involve some sort of mental communication between the UFOs and human witnesses.

Skinwalker, 1990s

In Colm Kelleher's excellent book on the Skinwalker Ranch he says that the couple who then owned the spread had strong feelings that something or someone was watching them. For those who have not read the book or heard of Skinwalker Ranch there is more discussion in the next chapter. The wife believed that something waited for her to leave a room before taking something and hiding it in the microwave or performing some other mischievous trick. On one occasion she swore that all the shopping she'd just unpacked and stored away was mysteriously returned to the counter-top within minutes of her leaving the room.

There were multiple occasions when the owners and the Bigelow people experienced strange and sometimes terrifying feelings which were associated with sightings of some kind. Even Kelleher himself – as leader of the scientific investigation – got the feeling of being watched during his time investigating the ranch[90].

In *Triangular UFOs*, David Marler tells a similar story about a "Mr C" who was followed by a UFO in Lebanon, Illinois. Paul Sinclair believes that the links are even stronger than mere telepathic thought transference. He thinks that people see what they are attuned to see by their mindset and upbringing. Somehow, he feels, the sighting links closely to what the individual witness believes or expects. In the same way as for Colm Kelleher at Skinwalker Ranch, Sinclair noted that lightforms (as he terms them) tap into human emotions. They bring anything from extreme fear to high levels of pleasure and excitement. Unlike the blue spheres at the Skinwalker Ranch – which conveyed intense fear to witnesses – a 2006 sighting of a blue sphere at Weaverthorpe in East Yorkshire gave the witness an intense feeling of elation. In total contrast to the reports from Skinwalker,

Sinclair reports red and orange spheres as bringing feelings of fear and dread[91].

There is a good deal of evidence which seems to support Sinclair's theory. People see what they expect or are conditioned to see. There are lots of examples in which people see UFOs time after time. Are they "willing" these sightings? Do people who never see a UFO in their lives, simply will themselves not to see them? To what extent does the testimony, or another human being, influence what others see or experience?

But there are far more examples of people who are surprised by the sighting and who see objects in spite of great unwillingness to be involved in such a thing. The question, in the light of all the existing evidence, is how do mental links actually work?

Chapter 18

Strange Creatures

They were able to get a real good look at the little man, not believing what their eyes were seeing. Both men fired on the creature, knocking it to the ground. When it fell from the tree, it just floated; the men couldn't believe their eyes.

Stith, Geraldine Sutton. *Alien Legacy*

Psi is … the 23rd letter of the Greek alphabet and first letter of the word "psyche." It is the term parapsychologists use to generically refer to all kinds of psychic phenomena, experiences, or events that seem to be related to the psyche, or mind, and which cannot be explained by established physical principles.

Mario Varvoglis, PhD

My research for this volume has taken me in many new directions. As a consequence, I have found myself looking into mysteries that, a few years ago, I would have thought totally divorced from the UFO subject and of no possible relevance to it. Like many people I had always thought of UFOs as a distinct topic; extremely interesting but completely separate from studies of the "paranormal" –which I interpreted as being about ghosts, telekinesis, clairvoyance and such like. My mind conjured up images of Charles Dickens'

Christmas Carol, fairground fortune tellers, and mediums sitting around cloth-covered tables in darkened rooms.

But, as we have seen, unidentified objects have been linked, on far too many occasions, with stuff that by rights belongs in the realms of the extreme paranormal. Certain areas of the world are well known as locations where multiple aspects of the paranormal are experienced on a constant basis; where strange creatures appear and disappear, where UFOs are seen regularly, where animals are mutilated, and from which people are either abducted or completely disappear. Is this simple coincidence? It could be, but we cannot be certain. From my own research we can discuss several examples of areas or incidents in which UFOs are associated closely with other aspects of the paranormal (quite apart from abductions and mutilations). These include specific events like the Kelly-Hopkinsville affair and localities where multiple paranormal phenomena have been witnessed for a very long time. Parts of Scotland, Wiltshire, West Virginia, Massachusetts, and many more The examples we will look at are Oregon, Yorkshire, and Utah.

Crater Lake, Oregon

It is no secret that Mt Mazana in Oregon is a very strange place. The Klamath tribe of the indigenous peoples believe the whole area to be sacred. For them, Crater Lake is the place where the spirit of the sky and the spirit of the underworld clashed. This may well be a tribal memory of the days when the volcano exploded and created the caldera in which now lies the deep and beautiful Crater Lake. Another regional tribe, the Modocs, believe the whole area around the mountain to be cursed and evil. They cite it as the place where people disappear.

They are not wrong, but it is not difficult to understand at least some of the reasons why people are lost in the region. The mountain is extremely rugged,

covered in forest, riven by deep canyons and gorges, and culminates in steep cliffs falling away to the lake below. Crater Lake is extremely deep – almost 2,000 feet. Probably due partly to its being pure rainwater it exhibits the most beautiful blue colours. The Klamath believe that one should avoid looking into its waters for too long lest evil befall.

The area is well known for UFOs. Sightings have included groups of objects flying over the lake, a 1997 pilot report of USAF fighters chasing UFOs over it, and numerous sightings of strange lights. Park Rangers have investigated what were apparently large groups of people around illegal fires on Wizard Island (which is in the lake itself) and found no fires, no camp sites and no-one on the island.

Bigfoot-like creatures have been spotted in the area but it also abounds with tales of "disappearing humanoids". This is one of those numerous areas of the world which are cited by enthusiasts as entrances to the interior of the planet. We tend to discount weird claims of UFO bases in Antarctica, in the Himalayas, and in US mountains such as Shasta and Adams but there is no denying that a number of people swear to seeing objects entering them.

RAF Bempton, Yorkshire

On the rugged coastline of England's largest and most beautiful county – Yorkshire – lies an area whose paranormal activity has received a good deal of attention over the years. On the edge of the grey North Sea, close to Flamborough, stands the now derelict RAF Bempton radar station. All around this area ordinary people have vanished without a trace over the past seventy years, leaving no clue as to how or why. They simply vanish. The area has villages whose present-day inhabitants swear they have seen werewolves, big "dogs", and huge "cats". Paul Sinclair (see Bibliography), who did an immense amount of research on the area, believes that the

apparitions may be inter-dimensional[92].

UFOs abound in the area. Captain William Schaffner, an American exchange pilot flying with the RAF, died in 1970 when his Lightning fighter crashed after reportedly chasing a UFO. An RAF Tornado crashed under similar circumstances in 1998. Sinclair cites evidence of apparitions in the area – including the famous "Flixton Werewolf", undersea UFOs, and orange globes, and he catalogues numerous examples of strange disappearances of humans and even weirder experiences. One of Sinclair's witnesses reported seeing three lights in the sky one of which began to spin immediately after the witness received the powerful impression that the object was watching him. A PhD psychologist, the witness was no UFO-geek and made very clear his initial scepticism.

The people around Mt Mazama and in East Yorkshire represent just two small areas of the world visited by strange creatures – huge humanoids, black dogs and large cats, wolves, and werewolves. The creatures – often with glowing red eyes – are the stuff of fairy tales, legends, and horror movies. Yet they are reported by modern people from their cars and from the safety of their beautifully heated homes in which TVs and radios are playing in the background.

There have been humans living in the Flixton area for at least 10,000 years – nearby there is a Neolithic village which was occupied immediately after the last glaciers retreated from the region. For getting on for nine hundred years there have been stories of a "werewolf" in the nearby Yorkshire village of Flixton. Many accounts say it walks upright, stinks badly and attacks animals and humans. A large and ferocious wolf was reported to have attacked a carriage full of people near the village in the year 1800. One of the occupants shot the creature but it did not seem to react to being shot (compare with the shooting of a wolf on the Skinwalker Ranch). A truck

driver in the 1970s had a similar experience and, in 2016 there were seven reports of a creature that was “half dog and half man”. This creature walked upright when it wanted but ran on all fours and was seen to jump a thirty-foot wide canal.

Needless to say the area is also associated with UFO sightings stretching back as far as research can go. In 2013, for example, a local reported to MUFON a photo taken by her father which showed a strange object in the frame. He had been watching a display by the RAF Red Arrows and – unawares – caught an object in the photo which exhibited that weird “tipped” angle. Yorkshire UFO groups have recorded over 800 sightings in the county in the past few years.

In 1955 a group of US citizens were visited by a very different type of creature to the Flixton Beast; half way between the aliens of common understanding and the goblins which we read about as children. The Suttons and their extended family were not telling fictitious tales, though. The terrifying events actually happened, and they involved some of the most puzzling apparitions you are likely to come across.

The Kelly-Hopkinsville Affair; 1955

The story, which involves a UFO sighting and an invasion of small creatures, is simply incredible in its most profound sense. It involves partially-corroborated evidence of a terrified yet highly credible family who were subjected to a night-long invasion by strange creatures. Yet, incredible or not, the facts turn out to be scarily plausible.

The name of the affair sounds like a family name, but it isn’t – it’s the combined names of two places; a hamlet known by the name of Kelly, and a larger town called Hopkinsville to the south. Both are in Kentucky and near another, appropriately named, town called – Fearsville!

On the August 21, 1955 a summer family gathering was underway in the Kelly home of one Elmer Sutton, whose mother and his brothers and their families, plus brother-in-law Billy Ray Taylor, and his wife and children from Pennsylvania, were all having a convivial time. Altogether there were eleven adults and children present. It's important that I make clear at this stage that these were God-fearing country folk and that no alcohol or drugs were being consumed that evening – this was vouched-for by the police. After the event no-one cast the slightest aspersion on any of those present. The Suttons and Taylors were regarded as sober and honest citizens even if Billy Ray Taylor was guilty of embellishing the story a bit.

The evening was going well when, at about 7pm, Billy Ray popped outside with a bucket to draw some water from the well. When he returned he told the group that he'd just seen a disc-shaped object travel across the sky. Not a soul believed him and they all settled back down to the family exchange of news and gossip, totally unaware that their lives were about to change forever.

It started about an hour later when the dog started barking. The adults must have frowned at each other: Who would be coming calling at that time? Elmer and Billy Ray got to their feet and went out into the backyard. Was it an animal of some sort?

At first, they saw nothing but then a figure – between three and four feet in height – emerged from the bushes across the yard. The men stared in shock. The figure was metallic silver all over except for its eyes which were large and glowing. Its ears were pointed and its legs, they later said, looked spindly and atrophied. The figure floated rather than walked. It had long arms ending with long fingers which had talons on the end. Unsurprisingly they ran for the guns which every country family kept for hunting. The figure was still there when they returned and one of the men raised his rifle and shot it. They said

that the bullet must have hit it because it made a sound like the shot had hit a metal bucket.

At the cost of being annoyingly repetitive it needs to be restated that these guys were backwoodsmen. They hunted to survive. So, they were not only used to weapons but extremely good shots. The strange figure flipped over backwards when shot and scooted back into the bushes. Billy Ray and Elmer turned around and immediately spotted another, similar creature on the roof. They shot that one too, before dashing back into the house.

The men were very spooked by this stage. But Elmer went outside once more, after they had first fired through a window at a gremlin-like face peering in. As he emerged he felt a hand touch his hair. He turned swiftly and shot another (or the same) creature on the roof just above his head. There was another one in the trees, so he shot that too. It merely floated to the ground and, thoroughly scared by their inability to stop these creatures, Elmer dashed back inside and barred the doors.

For another three hours the families endured constant pestering by things that appeared at the windows, scrabbled at the doors, and scratched on the roof shingles. The men inside fired repeatedly through the roof, the windows and the walls in an attempt to kill – or at least deter – the invaders.

By just before 11pm, though, everyone had had enough, and the families concocted a plan to escape their persecutors. In one rush – covered by the men with their guns – they ran for the cars and piled in. They drove the eight miles into Hopkinsville, straight to the Sheriff's office, where an amazed group of law officers listened to their story. The credibility of these folks is massively supported by the fact that the police did not instantly tell them to go home and sober-up. Instead they took what they had been told as the literal truth of what the families had experienced. The local Sheriff called in extra support from the State police and from local military. It was a veritable

army that set off back to the Sutton homestead about half an hour later. Sixteen police and military plus the eleven family members.

There were no creatures around when the forces of law and order arrived. Instead they found a bullet-shattered cabin and a small glowing spot on the ground where Elmer said one of the creatures had been shot. They searched the area and stayed with the families until close on 2am.

You can imagine that the family group only wanted to get to bed and forget the entire event but, from 3.30am until dawn, the creatures returned and the men fought them off constantly.

But that, as far as we know, was it. The scary little gremlins never returned.

In subsequent interviews, all the family members, independently, gave the police the same rough description of the creatures (their drawings and accounts were almost identical) and there has never been any doubt that their testimony was, as far as they were all concerned, the God-honest truth.

The sceptics have argued that what happened was that Billy Ray saw a meteor beyond the trees which he mistook for a disc, and that the “beings” were merely the local brand of owl (which, admittedly, can stand a couple of feet tall or more). The “explanations” sound superficially plausible but, as usual, the sceptics major on “could have been”. They also tend to ignore the complexities of the story and the characters of the witnesses.

These were honest country folk, through and through. They would recognise an owl when they saw one. After all, owls have extremely short legs which were certainly not long and spindly, owls do not have arms AND legs, and their movement could never be described as floating. When scared by a gunshot they wouldn’t back-flip or float away, they’d take to the air with (for the local owls) a six-foot wingspan. Even someone who’d never left Brooklyn in their life would spot the tell-tale signs of a large bird of prey.

And, even if a group of owls decided that the Sutton home was worth scratching at, and that peering in the windows was a good idea, you have to wonder why expert marksmen with shotguns and rifles could not bag one or two, with a war-load of ammunition, across a time-span of getting on for three to four hours. The police found the home and its windows absolutely riddled with bullet holes.

On the surface, at this distance in time, the Kelly-Hopkinsville incident could be seen as an amusing folk-tale. But it actually happened. The police have records of it, and there's never been a convincing explanation of those naughty little creatures. One of the children, Geraldine Stith, later wrote two books on the event in order, she said, to set the record straight (see Bibliography) and in July 2017, the magazine *Country Living* ran a story on the incident. It may or may not be totally accurate, but it does provide a degree of additional detail[93].

The uncanny resemblance between the Kelly-Hopkinsville case and centuries-old tales of fairies, goblins, dwarves, elves and "little people" from all around the world is extremely striking. Sceptics would say that this is because those tales are exactly where the families got their inspiration for the little jape. Possibly. But the police found absolutely no evidence of drink or drugs on the people or at the scene. The police held the Suttons in high regard as solid Christian families. The investigators stressed that the families were of good reputation.

So, why would a perfectly sober group of men, with women and children present, shoot up their own house and fabricate such a preposterous story? Money? It's true that Elmer Sutton established charges for sightseers and probably made a few dollars from those, but those charges were quite short-lived and understandable when he and his family were being pestered every day by rubberneckers. The only books from the families were published

many years later and by one of the children. Elmer and his family moved out of the house within months and never came back[94].

The Kelly-Hopkinsville affair makes for a good story and great fireside repetition on cold, dark nights but, no matter how much instant disbelief one tries to erect against it, the tale has more than enough credibility to prompt further thought, especially if it is set against a slew of other similar tales like those from Britain and from the famous Skinwalker Ranch.

One final point could be made. What would have been the result if Elmer Sutton and Billy-Ray Taylor had not decided to shoot the critters? One can easily understand why they assumed the creatures were hostile. They were so unusual as to be scary. So, yes, most people who had a gun would probably have used it. But on the whole, those creatures committed no hostile act. They scrabbled at the shingles, peered into the windows, and touched Elmer's hair from the roof. But, if you were trying to scare a bunch of humans, those things would be par for the course. If there were several of them and they were impervious to bullets and they wished harm to the humans why didn't two or three of them set on the men when they were outside?

Scary they certainly were. But were they hostile, or were they just playing?

Skinwalker Ranch, 1990s

The Skinwalker Ranch in Utah is an utterly engrossing example of multiple types of phenomenon, including portals, UFOs, strange creatures, poltergeist-like activity, and more, being seen in a relatively small area, within the same timeframe. In Native-American folklore a "skinwalker" is a supernatural creature that can take many forms. Usually these are animals or birds such as wolves, coyotes, bears, owls, hawks and eagles, but they can also take the form of humans. In common with similar tales from around the world, skinwalkers are shape-shifters. We'll come back to the core story of the

Skinwalker Ranch after a brief diversion into the wider subject.

The Ranch is located in north-east Utah, next door to one of the oldest and largest native American reservations. This is occupied by the Ute people from which Utah got its name. Paranormal events – and the area has a deep and extensive history of such – first came to light on the ranch in the 1990s but it is likely they go back a great deal farther than that. The Utes, have a tradition of avoiding the area in and around the ranch because they believe the land to be cursed. They know it as land on which shape-shifting creatures often roam and bad things happen. In their traditions they ascribe the curse to their native-American neighbours – the Navajo.

The vast western state of Utah is one of the largest producers of natural gas in the US. It has a population about half the size of London, England and a total land area larger than that of the whole UK. In the far north-east of the state lies one of the main Ute reservations; called Uintah-Ouray. The local county is Uintah County and, between Vernal and Duchesne, lies a ranch which used to be called the Sherman Ranch. Now it goes by the name "Adamantium Skinwalker". The roughly 500-acre property – in prime cattle country – used to be owned by a couple called Terry and Gwen Sherman. They owned the place for only around two years (which says a great deal about what they went through). Those months were arguably the most traumatic of their lives. When they finally gave up the terrifying struggle, the ranch was bought by the well-known businessman Robert Bigelow. He wanted it for his *National Institute for Discovery Science (NIDS)* to conduct serious scientific research on suspected paranormal activity. In 2016 he sold it to an unknown buyer through a real-estate company called Adamantium.

The area is famous not only for the ranch but for its UFO sightings. The unofficial historian for such things, a retired school-teacher called Joseph Junior Hicks, built up an impressive list of strange events and has his own

theories as to what is going on. Frank Salisbury and Hicks wrote a couple of the best early books on the phenomena in northern Utah.

But, let's return to the early 1990s when an excited and very keen Sherman family moved into their new ranch and brought in their high-quality cattle. Terry Sherman had great plans for his new ranch and put in a lot of effort and money to try to make them come to pass. Instead, the events at the ranch over just two years left his business in tatters and drove him and his family to the very edge of sanity.

I do not know whether Terry Sherman knew that he was buying an area of land known to the Utes as "the path of the skinwalker", but the Sherman Ranch certainly proved to him that something was very wrong with that particular chunk of territory. From the start it appears that things were not as they would normally be on a western ranch. Sherman found that the place (vacant for at least nine years previously) had been completely fitted out with dead bolts (on both sides of the doors!) and heavy-duty guard dog chains. George Knapp, the intrepid journalist, tells of the day the new owners moved into their property. While they were standing outside they saw what appeared to be a wolf in the pasture. It didn't run away, it came across to them and stood near them almost like a family pet – Terry's father actually petted it. But then it leapt across the yard and grabbed the head of a calf that had injudiciously poked it out through the bars of a pen. Nothing the humans could do would get the wolf to release the valuable animal, so Terry shot it with a .357 Magnum handgun. Such bullets are pretty powerful. Depending on the gun he was using, and the exact cartridge-load, the bullet would have left the barrel at between 1,200 and 1,500 feet per second.

He shot it twice without the creature appearing to be in the least perturbed. When it eventually let go of the calf it got shot twice more – again without much sign of reaction and certainly no blood. At that point Sherman probably

wondered what was wrong with his gun, so a hunting rifle was fetched, and the weird wolf was shot again at close range. Even after a second powerful rifle shot, the wolf merely walked off. It had now taken six bullets but showed no sign of any real damage except a small piece of itself which appeared to have been dislodged by one of the bullets. It was tracked for a fair way, but the paw prints eventually vanished.

That unbelievable introduction was the start of some even more incredible happenings at the ranch. Mrs Sherman was constantly pestered by what seemed to be malicious creatures. She never saw them, but something moved her stuff and caused havoc around the house. The couple saw one of their horses attacked by a heavy, hyena-type beast which simply vanished into thin air as they approached. One of their visitors was scared out of his wits by an almost invisible thing which approached him at incredible speed and roared very loudly right in his face.

The events at the ranch are simply unbelievable but no-one had any reason to make them up (especially once the Shermans were trying to sell the place). George Knapp also says that, among a host of other creatures, nine-foot humanoids were seen on several occasions (he compared them to Bigfoot) and that the rancher and his son saw a UFO sat on one of their pastures. It looked, they said, like a camper-truck but, when they went to approach it, it just lifted off and flew silently away. The ranch was also infested with blue orbs which induced deep fear whenever they were around and which Terry Sherman blamed for killing three of his dogs. The family lost fourteen cattle to mutilation and disappearance out of an eighty-strong herd and some of the other things that happened simply defy belief. On one occasion Terry lost a heavy post-hole digger. Weeks later he found it up a tree.

By 1996 the Shermans were literally at the ends of their tethers. Luckily Robert Bigelow heard about the issue and offered to buy the place and set it

up as a research station for NIDS. It's probably fair to assume that Terry and Gwen Sherman bit his hand off. Nevertheless, in spite of having bought another ranch, they continued to work with the small army of researchers and scientists which Bigelow shipped in.

It was the start of a long, expensive, and very serious piece of scientific research into the paranormal. Bigelow appears to have placed no boundaries on the scientists. They were to study whatever came their way – ghosts, paranormal creatures, portals, UFOs … everything.

Although Bigelow sold the ranch in 2016 we still do not know the full extent of what his research uncovered. However, enough has filtered out through such credible and authorised observers as George Knapp, Col John Alexander, and the leader of the team, Colm Kelleher, to indicate that the period of his ownership was by no means devoid of events and findings. In fact, the teams of researchers experienced some incredibly strange events ranging from a physicist reporting that his mind had been invaded, to the apparent opening of a portal and a creature emerging and then running off. Knapp stresses that Bigelow insisted on a strictly scientific approach from his team. The people from NIDS set up a command post, video and monitoring sites, and a string of observation posts. They also isolated the ranch by erecting a new boundary fence. Knapp wrote:

"*[the] effort constitutes the most intense and thorough surveillance of a UFO hot spot ever undertaken*".

The phenomena certainly continued while the NIDS researchers were present, but it proved incredibly difficult to record and measure events. Without a full report it is impossible for us to evaluate what might or might not have happened, but we know that Mr Bigelow was very keen on an

absolutely scientific approach. So, it stands to reason that, if areas proved problematic in terms of evidence, he would have insisted on keeping the affair to himself rather than risk public scorn for revealing only half a story. Knapp said that the phenomena seemed to understand that they were being studied and to avoid the scientists. Events were documented over months and years and the patterns became clear that, wherever the scientists put their gear, the events would occur somewhere else. This is eerily similar to what happened with Project Twinkle back in 1951 (see Volume 1).

Colm Kelleher describes these events in his book. On one occasion sensors on top of a telephone pole were disabled – in fact they were vandalised with considered force. Yet the sensors on a second pole with a good view of the first one saw precisely nothing happening over the entire period. Col John Alexander – certainly not the type to be swept up in any form of hysteria about UFOs and out-of-this world creatures – calls it "pre-cognitive intelligence" – an intelligence which senses what we are going to do before we do it. One of the NIDS scientists is quoted as saying:

It's some kind of consciousness, but it's always something new and different, something non-repeatable. It's reactive to people and equipment, and we set up the ranch to be a proving ground for the scientific method, but science doesn't seem amenable to the solution of these kinds of problems.

Even before Terry Sherman had sold the place he had already begun to suspect that electronics – especially the advanced kind – may be susceptible to whatever consciousness is represented by the events.

The ranch is still there but no-one is saying whether the incidents have continued and what they might be, and no-one, including the researchers of NIDS (now itself dissolved) has revealed anything substantial and certainly no firm conclusions.

To me, three things stand out from these events – and other similar ones:

Scientific enquiry and observation seem to act to reduce the frequency of the events or to cause them to be moved away from the point of study. This phenomenon has been shown in numerous small ways and in studies such as Hessdalen, Gulf Breeze, Twinkle, Washington 1952, and now Skinwalker - implying that Col Alexander's conclusions may be correct;

None of the events – including those with alleged close encounters and even damage to equipment and animals – seems to have led to any injury to humans (except mental stress). The reported creatures are sometimes incredibly fearsome – huge black dogs, big wolves that are unaffected by bullets, fanged reptile-like things, nine-foot humanoids – but none have been reported as doing more than scaring or teasing humans. Cattle, sheep, horses, goats, dogs, cats are killed, but not humans;

The extremely close similarities between incidents at the Skinwalker Ranch and incidents in other countries and areas (e.g. Bigfoot, the Scottish Grey Man, the Norfolk Black Dog, the West Virginia Mothman, and the Flixton Werewolf) could be argued to support a thesis that there may, indeed, exist geographical locations at which the boundaries between this world and other dimension or worlds are particularly thin and prone to being breached.

If the stories from Skinwalker were simply those from an individual who has written a book about their experiences, they would be intriguing but

could be laughed off as an almost certain hoax. But they aren't. The experiences of the Sherman family have been repeated on multiple occasions by independent scientists. And even though there appears to be little in the way of electronic or video evidence from the Bigelow investigations (at least not in the public domain) the testimony of the individuals concerned is convincing.

But there were also elements of humour – albeit black humour – which reinforce the credibility of the whole. Two examples come to mind: the incident when a meditating visitor was frightened out of his wits by a wraith-like thing which flashed across the pasture, stopped mere feet from him, and roared extremely loudly; and the incident when no fewer than four of Terry's prime bulls were somehow transferred from their pen and stuffed inside a small, locked trailer.

In a Hollywood horror film, the wraith would have crossed the pasture and bitten off the man's head. Instead of which it just roared. Why would anyone make up a tale like that? And the incident with the bulls is like something from a comic strip. Four 2,000 lb behemoths, any one of which could pulverise you in seconds, are found squashed calmly into a tiny trailer. There were no hoof prints between the pen and the trailer, the lock was secure and almost rusted up, and the beasts, when first found, looked as though they'd been hypnotised. Only when Terry banged on the trailer sides and "woke them up" did all hell break loose. Those prize bulls literally kicked and butted their way out, wrecking the trailer in the process. They were so panicked that it took almost half a day to round them up. It was as though someone or something was playing a small joke on Terry – or perhaps proving that nothing was beyond them.

A major recurring question about all modern instances of strange creatures is why they do not harm humans even when they are actually seen

inflicting tears and cuts on animals and when we suspect they might be killing and mutilating cows and other farm animals? For all the stories and sightings, we have no indications that these, possibly interdimensional, creatures mean humans any real harm. As we saw in the chapter on mutilations though, the same cannot be said about what appear to be their attitudes towards animals.

> *And a little over a year later, less than sixty minutes after an hour-long meditation by an investigator, a creature crawled through a tunnel of light in mid-air at exactly the same spot where the meditation had taken place****[95]***.

Colm Kelleher's book and George Knapp's articles on Skinwalker are well worth reading[96] because they set out the details of what happened to the Shermans and then the even weirder things which happened under the NIDS stewardship. Both are also insightful and thoughtful evaluations of the facts.

All of this was – and perhaps still is – going on in an area of the world which is renowned for constant sightings of UFOs. The Uintah basin's history of UFOs and weird creatures is well catalogued and Colm Kelleher's account shows that those things appeared around the Sherman farm on a regular basis. For example, on one occasion an object looking like a large RV was seen in a distant pasture. When the observers started towards it, the vehicle took off silently and floated away. On other occasions more conventional UFOs were spotted travelling across the area. On yet another, a strange portal, visible only from the ranch was seen in the sky.

Whether it be Utah or Scotland, Oregon or Yorkshire, West Virginia or Wiltshire, hotbeds of UFO activity are often closely associated with weird

creatures being spotted on the ground – massive humanoids, hyena-shaped dogs, winged-creatures, wolfmen, even small, goblin-like beings. They may not, of course, be connected in any way. But what are the odds?

Part 4

Physics & Metaphysics

We stand at the edge of reality … The edge of reality is also the edge of knowledge. But beyond this edge is another science and another knowledge.

> Hynek, J. Allen. The Edge of Reality: A Progress Report on Unidentified Flying Objects

… the serious study of the impossible has frequently opened up rich and unexpected domains of science.

> Professor Michio Kaku *The Physics of the Impossible*; Doubleday; 2008

Is anyone in the audience a psychic? Please raise my hand.

> Old joke.

Chapter 19

From our Mole – 4

First of Those Present stood at the end of the vast cabin facing several thousand silent and alert faces from many galaxies. He was only around four feet in height, with a puny body and spidery arms, but his eyes were bright with intelligence and anticipation. When he spoke, his voice was carried to every one of his paying passengers in whatever of several hundred languages they spoke.

"In just a few moments we will begin our journey back in time to the Black Days here on Earth. You will all understand, at least intellectually, what to expect, but few of you will have any idea of the powerful psychological and cultural impact the journey will have on you. I warn you to prepare for deep shock.

"As one who has had the privilege of undertaking the journey on several occasions I have a number of very serious additional warnings for you.

"We will be transiting in about two minutes and you may feel a little nauseous, and even somewhat dislocated, but that will pass in a few minutes. It is caused by the time warp through which we must travel to reach the ancient, barbarous times some three thousand years ago. Once established in the era the craft will initiate its circuit and tour of the planet.

"Your first shock will be the appearance of everything. The verdant beauty of our own times will be replaced by harsh, artificial constructions of crude concrete and steel. Much of the green core of the place has been ripped out and built over. You will be shocked even more by the ant-hill nature of the society. The Earth in those days managed to carry a population of around seven billion – on a single planet! Today humanity is scattered around so many

worlds that we have almost lost count of our numbers. But none of those planets nurtures even a fraction of the seven billion you will witness swarming over the old Earth. It has led some previous passengers into traumatic shock and despair – please prepare yourselves.

"But it is time. The transit to the year 97K310 is beginning."

There was a period of disturbing motion and colours which could only be seen in their heads. Deep, soul-wrenching dislocation followed, along with waves of nausea and irrational fear. But finally the massive, triangular craft materialised, stabilised, and began its pre-planned tour of the Earth three thousand years in the past. It floated along freeways and across towns and cities, it hovered over fields and lakes, it glided alongside rickety, impossibly dangerous jet airliners. It floated for long, invisible periods over various cities.

Within a short while many of its passengers were in states of near catatonia, their minds almost unhinged by the shock of what their holographic viewers were showing them. Medical robots zipped around the huge cabin, giving relief.

First of Those Present stood again.

"The tour still has a long way to go but I must apologise for the distress caused to certain passengers by what they are witnessing. I omitted to mention the dirt and disease, the suffering and the squalor, and, of course, the unremitting evil of the planet's unending wars, the jealousy and hate, and the constant killing and maiming even within societies.

"We who guide these trips are inured to the squalor and the violence but I know that those of you who felt and saw those cold-blooded murders today, and those of you who were unfortunate enough to tune into the horrific violence of the two huge wars and the constant killing ever since will never forget the experience. Our scientists are still attempting to work out how sets

of apparently identical creatures can find something to kill each other over. This is one of the few societies we have ever studied which has something called "murder".

He took in the emotionally-drained faces around him.

"And the worst of it is that each of those pathetic creatures down there is completely alone. Only a handful of the tens of millions in that city now below us can sense or communicate properly with another human. It is almost impossible for us to understand the loneliness, the unending psychic isolation.

"These are not called the Black Days for nothing".

Chapter 20

Science & Consciousness

In other words, there are (at least) two levels of reality: One consists of the rules and regularities of the physical world, which science can access and measure. But the other level, the ultimate source of those rules and regulations, science can never even access, much less come to know.

Robert Kuhn; April 02, 2016, Science & Astronomy

Science can continue only so long to ignore phenomena that literally invade people's lives and that have fundamental effects on the worldview of millions of people around the world[97].

Colm Kelleher; op cit.

Up to now we've focussed on the physicality of UFOs and then the associated things which make the subject very strange, those which blur the boundaries between reality and unreality. And that's the real problem for the outsider – if there is some doubt that UFOs are a purely physical phenomenon, doesn't that invalidate the whole thing? If UFOs can disappear into thin air and are associated with fringe subjects like Bigfoot, people communicating telepathically, and inter-dimensional travellers, shouldn't we just dismiss the whole thing as the ravings of a bunch of unhinged weirdos?

Frodo's Journey

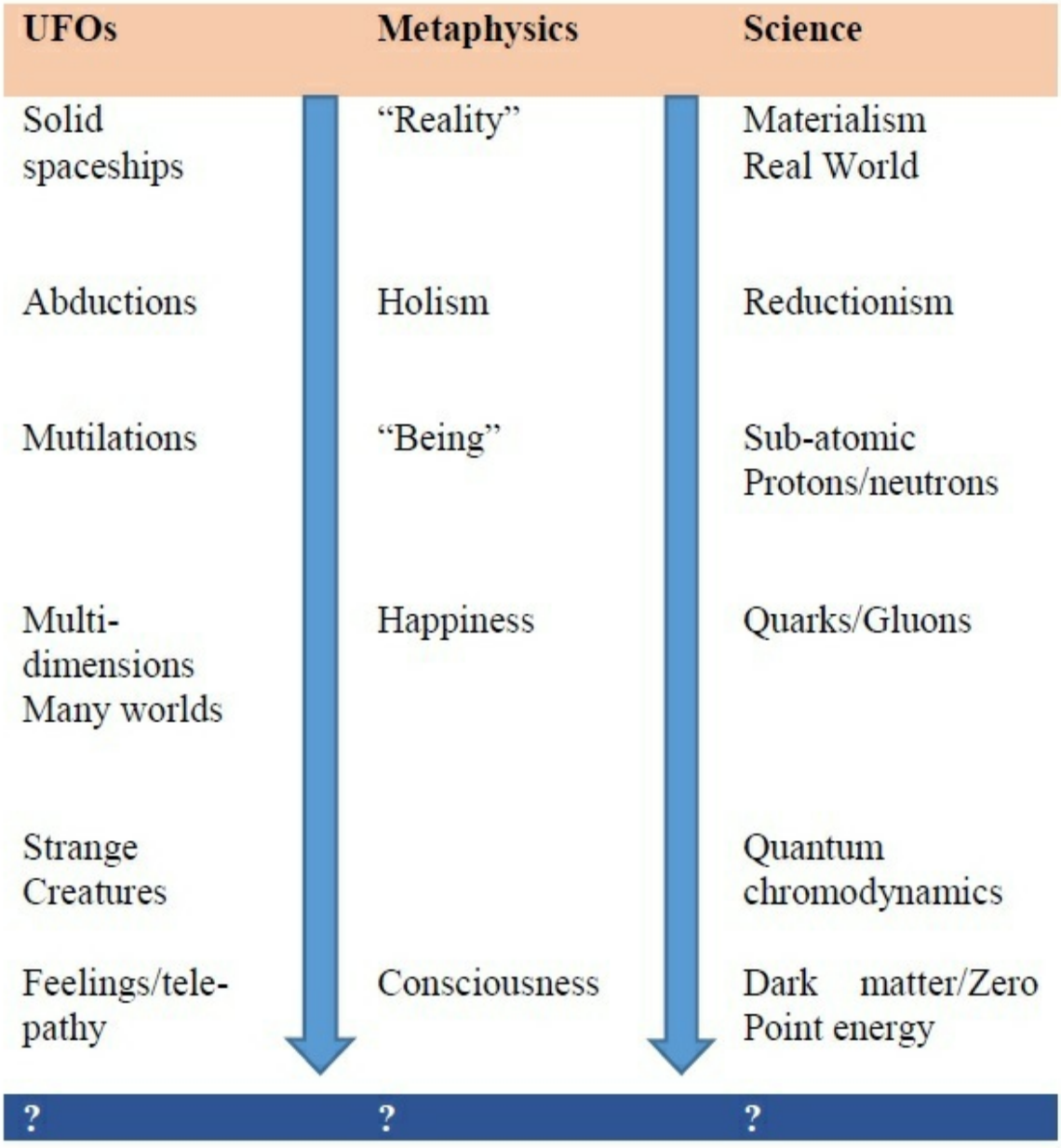
The whole subject is a bit like Frodo's adventures in *The Lord of the*

Rings[98] (in fact it sometimes makes Frodo's journey seem like a walk in the park). Like Frodo, the outsider begins in the beautiful, verdant downs, where UFOs are comfortingly physical and, somehow, very familiar. Slowly but surely, however, the way becomes steeper and more difficult; leading to abductions, inexplicable animal killings, dimensions, portals, and disappearing UFOs. Once we reach the high mountains, we enter the sort of world with which the alchemists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were extremely familiar; a confusingly uncertain mix of what we trust as real and what may only be real in our minds; a world where what we want to believe, what we cling to as being possible, is assailed on all sides by things that simply cannot be true.

Strangely, the quandaries affecting the UFO discipline are now beginning to mirror those impacting upon philosophy, metaphysics and science. Each is now leading humanity deeper into illogical and mysterious realms and each may bring insights to benefit the others.

We know that UFOs are closely associated with human abductions, with accounts of creatures floating through doors, and with telepathic communication between abductor and abductee. Hundreds of UFO witnesses testify – almost reluctantly – that they took part in some form of telepathic communication with a UFO. There are a great many accounts of UFOs appearing or disappearing from and into thin air. There are too many accounts to be ignored of UFOs being seen around the sightings of very strange creatures.

The Metaphysical Journey



Mainstream science, too, has found itself entering realms that, decades ago, were the stuff of boffins' nightmares. The once secure foundations of "solid" reality have been shaken and, in some places, totally destroyed by discoveries and powerful theories which paint the world as insubstantial and

unpredictable. Scientists still do not know, for example, exactly how neutrons and protons acquire their spin. Sounds pretty basic, but at the femtometre level[99] those particles are made up of gluons and quarks which do not appear to behave in "normal" ways. Science is gradually uncovering a universe which operates in very strange ways at the femtometre and the quantum level; ways which are never "certain"; which can only be understood in terms of probabilities.

Where UFOs are concerned, every link in this logical chain is solid. Link-by-link, it leads from the comfortable world of flying saucers and little grey men into the murky depths of the paranormal. One way or another, some – if not all – UFOs are part and parcel of the weird worlds of goblins, and mythical creatures, of the ability to disappear, of telepathic communication, and of animals being stunned, killed and mutilated for their soft tissues. An even more profound possibility in all this is that UFOs may be one manifestation of a universal consciousness at work.

Our own journey is paralleling Frodo's. He travelled from a world he understood and was comfortable in, to a realm in which his beliefs were shattered and he had to acquire a completely new frame of reference. The study of UFOs is taking us along a similar path – from a cosy, accepted paradigm to a world of bafflement and confusion; one for which we – as yet – have no frame of reference.

No intellectual pursuit can be successful without a framework of knowledge and theories within which to explore and experiment; an understanding of certain fundamental principles. The alchemists of old encountered this problem and it defeated them. We may be experiencing the same thing today in the UFO domain.

The Philosopher's Stone

Back in the Middle Ages there were people who believed that a substance called the “Philosopher’s Stone” could transmute base metals into gold. They were called alchemists – and they failed. But alchemists used the scientific method and they took our knowledge of gases (Boyle) and gravity (Newton) to new heights. Those who think of alchemists as jumped-up magicians are well short of the mark. They were scientists who simply lacked the immense amount of knowledge we have gained over the past two and a half centuries. They could never have understood the rules which apply to the sub-atomic world and never have imagined the power needed to explore those realms.

For example, take the key ambition of all alchemists; to convert base metals like lead and bismuth into valuable ones like gold. To their minds, a heavy base metal should be able to turn into a heavy valuable one with, perhaps, the addition of another substance (in the same way as adding certain substances to iron can create steel, and zinc added to copper can create brass). Their favourite additive, which they thought would do the trick, was mercury, but they also tried virtually every other element they could think of. In a way it stood to reason – which is why common sense is sometimes the most dangerous sense of them all. If soft copper could be made into hard brass with the addition of zinc, why not add something to lead and create a more valuable form of heavy metal? It didn’t work because, unlike simple alloys, the transmutation of bismuth into gold has to take place at the sub-molecular level. Lead can certainly be turned into gold. The problem is that it takes so much energy that the transmutation is not worth it[100].

The alchemists’ long and unsuccessful battle to create gold demonstrates that we can only intellectualise concepts if we have the relevant framework of knowledge and an appropriate set of technologies. Perhaps, therefore, what happened to the early alchemists is what is happening to us “moderns” with respect to UFOs and the paranormal. We see things, we experience things,

and we interpret them using our existing intellectual framework. Fundamentally, however, we do not have the knowledge, technology, or even the philosophical approach to be able to understand them. Just like alchemists with metals, we interpret UFOs in our everyday, normal-science terms – as vehicles carrying people or things or, nowadays, as drones or robots. But the evidence of seventy years seems to point to them being more than that; far less predictable, far more inscrutable, perhaps far stranger, and maybe not completely susceptible to our much-vaunted scientific method.

A number of UFO organisations, and possibly some governments, are working hard to delve into the subject using magnetometers, spectrometers, radar, infra-red and many other techniques. UFO-Science in France, Hessdalen in Norway, and NICAP, NUFORC and UFO-Data in the US are all ploughing this particular furrow.

But, while such efforts must be made, and extended, the bottom line is that our attempts to solve the UFO mystery through science may be attempting to unravel something that cannot be scientifically unravelled in its entirety. Our faith in science is one of the rocks upon which our society is built. The human psyche rests on the confidence that science has an answer to everything, and that all problems can be solved if we give the scientists enough information or money. But it is now seeming very likely that we will have to find other avenues of knowledge, other frameworks – perhaps even a completely different paradigm, if we wish to fully understand what UFOs and their associated phenomena represent.

One Science to Rule them All

If you think about it, the scientific method is what mankind is all about. We think, we experiment, we repeat the experiment, we discover a new tool or technique. It’s been that way since the first human created fire. We used

the same approach to invent the wheel and antibiotics, and we are still doing it. But there was a time in our history – tens of thousands of years ago at least – when technology was an infinitesimally tiny part of our existence. In those days human life was focused on faith, belief and the power of the mind. Most of the time – far longer than modern religions have been around – our core certainty was a belief in the interconnection of mankind and the natural world. The shaman or the druid interpreted that world and people's entire lives were built on an unshakeable belief in gods and goddesses – generally representing natural elements or forces. In the west that faith in the "oneness" of life has been so eroded by the centuries of science and our religions that even devout religionists tend to see humans as individuals, separate from nature and the universe, working to earn a place in the afterlife. The Christian religion, for example, specifically raises mankind above the animals and implies that the planet, and all it hosts, was created entirely for our benefit and pleasure. The result is the western sense of disconnectedness of each human from his or her fellows, and the modern sense that humanity is a completely separate affair to the natural world. The result is that we have come to believe that our destiny is to dominate and control.

The disconnect is certainly real but whether it is ultimately of any importance has yet to be seen. There are many modern philosophers who argue that believing ourselves to be separate from the rest of the universe is to blame for the constant unrest and violence in the human world. They argue that it has caused the "in-group-out-group" attitude which drives conflict and prevents us from understanding more about our relationship to the planet and the universe. If all humanity and all of nature were to be seen as "one", if we were actually connected to the universe itself, what would that do to our view of one another?

The western world is all about "control". That philosophy has now infected

the whole of the planet bar a few small isolated communities. Western materialism rests on a belief that science and technology will help mankind to manipulate and control the natural world.

Dr Steve Taylor, who teaches psychology at Leeds Beckett University in England, is someone who believes that scientists can be extremely slow to adjust and adapt to new ideas and new realities. He blames our materialist and reductionist approach; our belief that the whole of the universe can be explained in terms of rigid, provable rules about the ways in which atoms and other particles behave; rules which use proof of how small bits work to show how everything must work.

This worldview has also been questioned by psychics and parapsychologists for many decades, but few took any notice of them. Today, however, the discoveries of quantum physics and the increasing body of scientific research into psychic abilities demand fresh attention to the possibility that psychic capabilities may be real[101] and that what we innocently call "reality" may not be real at all.

Taylor argues that the materialist mind-set causes us to see only physical links between things. This leads us to believe that we are conscious only because the neurons of our brains are connected by electrical activity – in the same way as a radio can only function when its innards are enlivened by flowing electricity. Intangible things like happiness, fear, and even insanity are, to materialists, simply different aspects of brain activity – the electricity causing chemistry to work in different ways and cause different bits of the brain to be more enlivened than others. The materialist framework also leads us to see humans as "genetic machines" with the physical constituents of our cells – including strands of DNA – being responsible for everything we are and do.

All of this may or may not be the case, but Taylor is definitely right that

our worldview is constrained by the belief that *everything* has a physical cause. The automatic corollary is that psi concepts like telepathy and precognition cannot possibly exist. Telepathy is impossible because there is no scientifically-understood means by which two brains can communicate without physical (which includes electromagnetic) means. Precognition is impossible for the same reasons but also because it overturns our traditional understanding of time. If time is linear and future events are not determined until they happen – as we have always believed – then no-one can possibly know what will happen next.

But traditional science has its limits. We know that there are things that humans cannot see, feel, hear, smell, or taste. Radio waves, neutron activity, ultra-violet light, dark matter, are all examples. Science has demonstrated that they exist, but we are beginning to wonder whether there are limits to the effectiveness (and even the applicability) of the scientific method. There may, in other words, be a problem with reductionism.

Reductionism v Holism

Science works – very successfully – because it reduces any complex issue to its component parts and then works on those parts in relative isolation. By studying sub-elements – perhaps simply improving or slightly changing a material (e.g. silicon as an electrical conductor) or a tiny part of a cell (DNA) – you can often make progress with higher elements such as electronic computing or the alleviation of complex diseases. But the philosophy at the base of scientific reductionism is that wholes are no more than the sum of their parts, and this is probably a very dangerous assumption.

The opposite philosophical approach is holism. This begins from a consideration of the whole and assumes that the whole is almost always better than the sum of its parts. Break a human being down into its

component parts and you get a few gallons of water and some minerals, but we all know that humans, animals and even plants are not simply the sum of their parts. The ancients believed that the Earth, the stars and the universe were also greater than the sum of their parts – and modern science is beginning to wonder whether they may not have been absolutely correct. Many scientists are beginning to wonder because the visible, physical universe is most certainly not all there is. Is our universe just one of many? Is it infinite and ever-lasting? Is our world simply a single world among an infinite number of similar ones? What is the role of dark matter or zero energy? Far-fetched as it sounds – is the universe a conscious entity?

Neither philosophy – reductionism or holism – is "correct" in an absolute sense. Both approaches have their strengths and weaknesses, but the important thing is that we should not forget that there are always other ways of looking at a problem. The fundamental western approach has always been "man *against* nature", the former trying to overcome the other and taking great pride in every discovery which seems to give mankind a victory over the forces of nature. Is there not greater benefit in working *with* nature, in changing our intellectual framework to encompass both holism *and* reductionism?

The thought is not new.

When J Allen Hynek and Jacques Vallée published *The Edge of Reality* in 1975 they called for more scientific study of UFOs but caveated it with the thought that maybe science would not be enough. They came to that conclusion on the basis of very limited facts. We've moved on a little since then. We're now *certain* that at least part of our reality – at the quantum level – can never be accurately predicted. At that level things are never certain, merely probable to one extent or another. We now know for certain that a phenomenon that we call UFOs really exists. And we now know for sure that

science will never be able to explain everything, and we can prove it.

I refer you to the October 2018 edition of *Scientific American* in which an erudite and highly experienced group of mathematicians explain their 146-page proof that the problem of the spectral gap is impossible to solve. For the lay-person it is an obscure issue of quantum physics, but their work has set the scientific world buzzing, for it means that several other very important issues may simply be undecidable[102]. In other words, there may be whole areas of what is happening around us that cannot be solved by science; issues that we will *never* be able to fully understand or, more importantly, predict with absolute certainty. We know that this is true of quite a lot of things at the quantum level but never before has anyone proved, incontrovertibly, that no matter what we do, no matter how much we learn, there are things that will never fit into a neat scientific proof, never submit to human domination. It hurts, doesn't it!

Dr Edgar Mitchell, the Apollo 14 astronaut, had what he called a transformation-moment in the Command capsule as it travelled back to Earth in 1971. He said that, while watching the blue and white globe of the Earth, the realisation that the molecules in his body and those of the Earth came from ancient stars gave him an ecstatic sense of the oneness of everything and the immense value of the planet. He went on to develop his belief that the universe itself is a conscious entity and that, rather than matter being the fundamental reality, consciousness is the basis of everything and matter is simply an illusion – a product of consciousness. He also believed that the quantum attributes of entanglement, coherence, resonance and non-locality are the key and that they lie at the base of hitherto paranormal phenomena like telepathy, remote viewing, psychic healing, and telekinesis. He cited the strange contact possible between mothers and children and between identical twins and sometimes between psychics and

dead people as possible features of what we currently call zero-point energy.

In a very real sense, Mitchell's belief in holistic-consciousness, as opposed to the interpretation of most religions, is not a million miles from the beliefs of the native American tribes and the ancient Britons and Druids. Both believed that every part of nature was a part of the whole, that aspects of "the gods" inhabit the Earth, the waters, the animals, and the trees, and that mankind is just a small – but integral – part of the whole. Against that background quite a few "modern" religions could be seen as narrow, divisive and isolationist; creating discord rather than harmony.

Fundamentally, the whole UFO question may come down to similar questions. At Skinwalker Ranch it seems that Robert Bigelow's scientists may have found that certain issues are simply not explicable in conventional terms because it is impossible to acquire data in the accepted scientific way. The problem at Skinwalker was that scientific instruments appeared to drive the phenomena away. Strange phenomena somehow "knew" that they were being studied and refused to cooperate. It was also thus in 1950s New Mexico when the carefully designed experiments under Project Twinkle seem to have suffered from the same issues, and possibly during some of the events of the Gulf Breeze episode of 1987.

In the most profound way, scientists may need to become alchemists once more; to study using the reductionist scientific method as far as possible but, in parallel, to open their minds to explanations which lie in the realms of the metaphysical, to contemplate the possibility that other forces may be at work than those we can measure and prove. It is perfectly rationale to study a small part of the whole – a molecule, a drug, a rocket motor – but it may also be essential to consider the whole environment, the whole human being, the whole planet, the universe as an entity.

Crashing the Party

Near Avebury Hill in Wilshire on July 6, 2009 an off-duty police officer spotted three figures in the middle of a field. He was interested because they looked like police forensic officers. The figures were blond-haired, tall, and were wearing what appeared to be white overalls. His professional interest piqued, he went to enter the field only to feel a distinct sense of high voltage electricity crackling in the air. He hesitated and, as he did so, the three figures ran off and disappeared. The police officer said, however, that they had run far faster than any human could run.

There are quite literally hundreds of accounts on record of similar encounters with strange creatures – both humanoid and animal in shape. A witness in Wiltshire in 2006 saw a shaggy, wolf-like animal beside the road. They said that it was about four times the size of a wolf and had bright red eyes. One of the scientists at the Skinwalker Ranch in Utah saw similar creatures. If people from centuries past saw anything like these things, it is not surprising that we have accumulated scores of tales of mythical beings and that they have probably been blamed for myriad human crimes.

You may think we've drifted a long way from UFOs; those mysterious objects which flit around in the sky and often in the water. Are "feelings" and disappearing UFOs, animal mutilations, strange creatures and even ghosts, genuinely something that someone interested in UFOs should be bothered with?

I believe that, yes, we should be exploring the rest of the paranormal alongside the study of UFOs. To repeat the rationale. There are very strong reasons to suspect that UFOs:

are much more than what they appear to be on the surface – that they

are more than just physical spaceships;

may be connected in some way with inter-dimensional and possibly time travel, as well as inter-galactic travel;

are closely involved in human abductions and possibly with animal mutilations;

sometimes appear to prompt or cause telepathic communication with human beings;

in some shape or form are connected to the appearance of some very strange creatures in many areas of the world;

seem to be able to influence human feelings.

As we've discussed, developments in physics have shown that the universe is less "physical" and possibly more deterministic than we had believed. Things happen instantaneously at the quantum level over vast distances – and without any apparent electromagnetic connection. We have not the slightest idea why two particles can instantly communicate and mirror each other over vast distances. But we know that they can. How does that work unless there is some form of energy which we cannot yet sense? We know that such a force must exist because all our calculations since Einstein, a century ago, prove it. Is it yet another "physical" aspect of an infinite universe that we will simply slot into our formulae, or is it an all-pervading consciousness?

I would guess modern humans are in the same place that an early Victorian

would be trying to understand radio. There was nothing in their intellectual framework which allowed them to understand wireless communication. But it was possible, and Marconi and others proved it later in the nineteenth century.

Something is operating at the quantum level which makes us all fundamentally insubstantial. The most basic elements of the molecules which make us up do not exist in any physical sense – they are some form of energy. As you read these words, you, the book or machine you are reading, the chair you are sitting on, the room you are in, are all some form of energy. You don't exist in a physical sense – you just *appear* to exist.

As we have come to understand more about the quantum world, the mysteries of dark matter and zero-point energy have moved up the priority list to serious and urgent scientific targets. Whether those things can be explained in conventional scientific terms or not, they represent a "field" which exists around, and possibly within, everything. The vast majority of the universe cannot be sensed with our human or electromagnetic senses. A couple of centuries ago human beings lived in blissful ignorance of electromagnetism – it was a huge part of the universe that we did not recognise or understand. Today we are in an analogous situation. We understand the physical world and electromagnetism – about 15% of the universe - but we haven't much of a clue about the rest.

In parallel, psychologists have shown strong evidence that we may not yet understand large areas of what it is to be human. We now know that psi abilities are, in fact, very real for a small percentage of the population. Experiments have shown capabilities which are, at best, rudimentary – recognising shapes or predicting binary outcomes – but they have also shown strong statistical correlations between psi abilities and the more creative members of our species[103]. As we will see below, there are also powerful

indications that the human mind can influence physical matter in the form of human bodies. Some informed writers have posited the possibility that sub-groups within the human race may once have possessed far higher psi ability than they do now but that hundreds and hundreds of years of materialistic development has blunted it.

No matter how hard the "mechanical UFO brigade" tries to ignore these things, the paranormal, with all its incredible baggage, keeps crashing the party. It's infuriating I know, but there it is. Study after study shows that paranormal activities and events go hand in hand with UFOs – from Project Twinkle in the early 1950s, to the Skinwalker Ranch in the 1990s, the regular reports of globes which impart feelings of happiness or of dread in the 2010s, and the invisible/disappearing UFOs reported by highly trained US Navy pilots.

The party crasher may have been uninvited, but they are going to be running things from now on.

Legends and Barriers

When people say that they see a UFO "appear" out of nothing, when they testify that very strange creatures seem to have emerged from UFOs or that they've been seen in the same areas as UFO activity, when people claim to have communicated with UFOs, and still others witness incredible "portals" appearing out of nothing, we find ourselves with our feet firmly planted at the boundary between the material world and the paranormal.

Ridiculous, the sceptics will say. How on earth can anyone link monsters and goblins, feelings and mysterious appearances, to flying saucers? More to the point how can anyone link the UFO phenomenon to the "barrier" between this world and somewhere else?

The surprising answer is – very easily. In fact, I would issue a counter-

challenge. In a world in which we simply have no idea what 85% of everything around us is all about; one in which we have already uncovered the mysterious quantum foundation, how can we possible discount anything? It's like living in a ten roomed house but only inhabiting and knowing one and a half rooms. Beyond the doors of the other rooms could lie absolutely anything.

Physicists are virtually certain nowadays that there exist many dimensions and many worlds. There is a theoretical possibility – a finite chance – that the boundaries between those dimensions and worlds might be breached and breached more often than we might wish. If such breaches are possible – allowing animals, humanoid creatures and/or UFOs to enter and leave our dimension/world – we would be forced to re-think a large number of what we have hitherto regarded as myths and legends. Just to take one example (but there are scores) Colm Kelleher's scientists at Skinwalker Ranch saw several extremely weird creatures and experienced events which involved things appearing and disappearing. If the "barrier", for want of a better word, exists, and modern scientists have testified to the things that can appear and disappear through it, what light does that throw on our myths and legends and on creatures such as the monsters which are reported to live in lakes such as Loch Ness and Lake Champlain, on Bigfoot, on the Scottish "Grey Man", on werewolves, and the whole menagerie of fairy-take creatures? If Bigelow's twenty-first century scientists at the Skinwalker Ranch could witness such things, why would that not have happened to other people in other eras, and on any continent?

Do some of our most cherished traditions rest on similar foundations? Most, if not all, of our favourite times of the year are rooted firmly in pre-Christian origins – Christmas, Easter and Halloween are three examples. Halloween has been sanitised and gift-wrapped in modern times. In Britain,

even in in the author's memory, it was called the *Night of All Hallows* or *All Saints* (the latter by the Church – although how they managed to rationalise a pagan festival of the underworld with Christian Saints is beyond me). However, like most Christian festivals, including Easter and Christmas, Halloween was never a Christian thing.

In the early years, the Christians massaged a commemoration of the death of a female Goddess, into one about the death of the Messiah, they smoothed the feast of Yule, which celebrated the rebirth of the Sun, into something to do with the birth of Jesus (in reality the child was almost certainly born between Spring and Autumn), and they edited the pagan festival of the end of summer and the beginning of autumn into that of All Saints.

It's fascinating however that, in spite of two thousand years having passed since the birth of Christ, the Anglo-Saxon races still have major problems accepting the "new" festivals. Easter remains stubbornly about birth and procreation rather than gruesome death. Almost every Easter card and Easter graphic portrays lambs, bunny-rabbits, and eggs rather than bloody crucifixion and resurrection.

Christmas, although named to celebrate of the birth of a prophet, remains more about pagan things like mistletoe, holly, trees and animals - not to forget fun and feasting – than about solemn thanks for the birth of Jesus. Likewise, the end of autumn is, in modern times, still about a primitive belief in ghosts, and mischievous creatures breaking through the veil and creating mayhem in our world.

"Eostre" was an ancient celebration of the Spring Equinox and has links to beliefs going back to the Sumerians. It was, and still is, a joyous celebration of the end of winter and the beginning of new life in the fields and forests. The incredibly powerful pull of pagan imagery and beliefs is something that modern religions try to play down (and to steal) but take a good look at the

reality of how modern people prefer to celebrate these times of the year and the paganism stands out as clear as day. The Catholic Church even had to agree to set the date of Easter according to the phases of the Moon.

Why is this important to the study of UFOs?

Because it demonstrates the fact that our main festivals are focused on the planet and at least one is concerned with the “barrier”. As we will see below, modern people have witnessed some very strange creatures, many of them associated with UFOs and UFO hot-spots, and these bear strong resemblances to the sorts of things which might have prompted our ancestors to establish the festivals which we know today.

The earliest of pre-Christians (we call them pagan but that itself is derogatory Christian term) believed that there were powerful links between humans and the universe and at least one of their festivals demonstrated their certainty that there were other worlds “above” and “below” this one, and other creatures who inhabit them.

All Hallows shows how strongly modern people are drawn to the concept of a barrier between themselves and another world. Halloween was the night that, in the ancient British, German, and Celtic belief systems[104], was called Samhain. It lasted for a full twenty-four hours, from sunset on what is now October 31, to sunset on November 1. Samhain is when the barrier between this world and the under-world becomes thin, when ghosts and strange creatures break through, to roam at will in the real world and pester and terrorise folks. Our modern Halloween is simply a marketing creation[105]. The original Samhain, with its very adult fear of the denizens of the under-world, has been stripped of its philosophical and cultural core and turned into a night of tricks and treats for children. Adults simply laugh at it and shrug it off as a myth, even a joke.

However, deep within the original tradition of Halloween lie some

interesting parallels to the paranormal world as we understand it today. Halloween rests on the concept of a veil between this world and one or more others, it proposes nasty creatures who are sometimes able to break through, and it has those creatures causing terror in humans. Although rarely voiced in mixed company, the character of Samhain to the ancient Britons of thousands of years ago is almost exactly the same as today's bright, shiny, bang-up-to-date view of what we call "paranormal" events.

Almost every culture across the globe, including the indigenous inhabitants of North America, Asia and Australasia, understood that the barrier between life and death could be penetrated. Note that I do not say that they "believed" the barrier could be penetrated. They *knew* it could. "The Barrier" or "The Veil" – call it what you will – is what many humans believe separates life and death, but it could also be interpreted as the boundary of different dimensions. Read the Colm Kelleher book on the scientific investigations into the Skinwalker Ranch and decide for yourself whether the so-called "Barrier" is real and whether humanoid and animal creatures can invade our world at will. Tales of frightening beasts and humanoid "monsters" abound in other US and UK locations. In Oregon, West Virginia, New England and many other places across North America tales are embedded in history. Five thousand miles away, in coastal Yorkshire, on the Scottish mountains, in rural Wales, and in Norfolk very similar apparitions have been reported in historical and modern times. And in all of those places, UFOs are reported in suspiciously close proximity in time and geography.

Compare the following examples from two different continents:

> *This bloody thing just crouched next [to] a tree. It was covered in dark brown hair and lean, sort of bone and muscle. I cannot say how tall it was, because it was sort of squatting down*[***[106]***].

> *Easily visible in the gathering twilight was another animal, all black … It looked like a very weird dog. The dog's head was much too large for its body, but the body was still big … very heavily muscled, with short legs … a hyena's body, but … a bushy tail!*[107].

From very separate, areas of the world come reports of creatures that are half human and half animal. Sinclair tells of the "Flixton Beast" which is recorded in English history from ancient days. It is said to be a humanoid creature with glowing red eyes that can walk on four or two legs. Colm Kelleher tells an eerily similar story of two US police officers who encountered a similar humanoid creature with red eyes. In the US and in the UK, there are scores of tales of winged, half-men – called mothmen, owlmen, or simply monsters. Deep in the mythology of the indigenous Australians there are fairy beings, snake-headed monsters, giant dogs or dingos, man-eating giants, and ghoulish dwarfs.

None of them proves anything and most are so far-fetched as to be disbelieved by just about everyone. But the sheer weight of sightings over many, many decades, in different parts of the world, and from very different people, is hard to discount.

As we've already seen, in the hamlet of Kelly near Hopkinsville in 1955, the extended family had a long battle with small, mischievous, goblin-like creatures who constantly tried to enter their home. The men-folk, who were expert marksmen, fired large numbers of shotgun cartridges and rifle bullets without causing any apparent damage to the creatures. Back in 1800 a stage-coach passenger in England shot a wolf-creature without harming it. In the 1990s the rancher at Skinwalker Ranch did the same thing, at point-blank

range, to a “wolf” which was attacking one of his calves – again without any apparent damage to the creature.

The prevalence of red eyes in the tales also brings to mind the experiences of people like Kelly Cahill in Australia when she was accosted (to put it mildly) by beings with large red eyes and taken to a UFO.

Okay, I hear you say, we have Halloween tales and global sightings of strange creatures, and we can link at least some of them to local UFO sightings and even to abductions, but it could all be simple coincidence.

We have been brought up to call the ancient stories “fairy tales”. Our libraries are crammed with stories about goblins and elves, werewolves, man-monsters, giant dogs, wolves, and dragon-like reptilians to name but a few. And, strangely enough, our UFO annals are also full of reports of very similar creatures.

Are they all merely folklore and imaginative exaggerations? Or is there a kernel of truth in them; did people really see something which has been either exaggerated or warped over hundreds and thousands of years, and do people still see these things? In recorded history such stories go back to at least the ancient Greeks. Could there be, as Colm Kelleher and many other students of the subject have suggested, a series of portals between our dimension/world and others? Are creatures, even advanced sentient creatures, crossing into our dimension from alternate realities?

In the context of the age of the universe, even of the age of the Earth, the few thousand years between the Spartans and ourselves are but a split-second. What their people saw and interpreted as creatures sent by the gods (or the gods themselves) could be the very same things that prompted the humans of 40,000 years ago to paint therianthropic creatures in deep caves[108], that caused the ancient Egyptians to worship hybrid human-animal gods, the same as those seen in the woods by medieval English

villagers and interpreted as the work of the Devil or as pure witchcraft, and the same as the red-eyed dogs, werewolves, and half-humans reported by modern Americans and British as supernatural beings and possible inter-dimensional visitors.

The legends take in Sumer, Assyria, Egypt, Greece, and the ancient British and Celtic traditions. Medieval Irish texts speak of people who could change their shape to that of wolves. In a text called the *Coir Anmann*, from late medieval times, there is a tale of a chap called *Laignech Fáelad*, (a fabled 6th century Prince of Ossory). It says that he and his children had the ability to change their shape to that of wolves and go hunting. There are even earlier Irish accounts of werewolves emerging from a cave at the time of Samhain to kill sheep[109].

My point is only that it is conceivable that such creatures may represent things actually witnesses by ancient people, a link with another dimension, in the same way as the disappearing UFOs and modern reports of mysterious creatures in the US and UK. Colm Kelleher considers this a serious possibility to explain some of the sightings at Skinwalker in the 1990s when the area was also a hotbed for UFO sightings and other very strange goings-on.

With respect to more recent times there are the various monster legends that pervade our societies. A compelling case can be made for Bigfoot/Sasquatch and its ilk. There are legends and sightings of huge, seven-foot-plus, humanoid creatures on almost every continent; trolls, bigfoot, yeti, etc. In North America alone over 500 plaster-casts of very large footprints have been recorded and documented by the *Bigfoot Field Researchers' Organization*, and there are other monsters. In Switzerland there is the tale of the Tatzelwurm – a lizard-like creature which preys on anything which comes within reach. Dragons are yet another strangely ubiquitous legend whose

origins go back beyond the days of easy travel by land or sea. From China to Wales, from the indigenous peoples of North America to those of Australia and right across Africa, the dragon is a very common “mythical” creature. But the incredible similarity in the myths prompts one to wonder how such commonality could arise across so many quite separate ancient cultures and whether there is a germ of truth among the mounds of exaggeration and elaboration.

England abounds with legends of big grey or black men, and pony-sized dogs with glowing eyes. Black Shuck is said to haunt the woods and fields of East Anglia. Many other parts of the UK have very similar tales to tell. Such creatures are regularly seen even today and are often explained in modern times as large, escaped cats, or simply as misperceptions. In June 1986 and again in December of 2007, a shaggy, long-haired creature was seen on the road between Thetford and East Wretham in Norfolk. It was described as being four-legged, greyish-white with small ears, large eyes, and a long snout. In 1986 the witness was evidently so puzzled that he drove past the creature three times to check it out. When the car passed it the third time the creature rose up on its hind legs, reaching an estimated height of six to eight feet, and looked almost human. The second sighting reported a very similar creature but this time grey with patches of darker colour.

Its counterpart in Scotland is a creature called Cu Sith which people describe as a green wolf, the size of a bull, with large glowing eyes! On a country road in the county of Devon a large dog called the Bunting Nook Dog is more a presence and a feeling. Drivers and cyclists have reported “hairy hands” which grip their steering wheels or handlebars and try to steer the vehicle off the road. This is remarkably similar to the now legendary tales of “gremlins” who afflicted allied aircraft during World War Two.

In Scotland we find a fascinating creature called *Fear Liath*. This is a ten-

foot-tall human-like being that has been seen, and felt, near the summit of Scotland's second highest mountain, Ben MacDhui. The descriptions of *Fear Liath* all agree that it is grey in colour and very tall – perhaps nine or ten feet; the bigfoot of the Highlands. If you were to get within range it seems you experience a powerful dread; something which is commonly associated with such things and which has been reported right up to the present day; for example, by witnesses to weird creatures at the Skinwalker Ranch. The interesting thing about the Big Grey Man is that it was first seen and felt by a scientist by the name of John Norman Collie. He saw the beast in 1890 but did not tell anyone about his experience for thirty-five years, until 1925. Collie evidently heard thunderous footsteps behind him; one step for every three of his own. He was terrified, and never again went back on that mountain alone. A soldier on leave in 1943 noticed a dark, oppressive atmosphere accompanied by sounds like footsteps. Unlike Collie, the soldier, a chap called Alexander Tewnion, actually saw the Big Grey Man. He said it charged him. He shot it three times with his revolver, but it still came on and Tewnion ran for his life. He said, in 1958, that he reached the glen, below, in record time.

Sceptics have tried to explain the incidents in terms of what is known as a "Brocken Spectre" – a shadow of oneself cast onto mist or cloud. Brocken Spectres are well known and are regularly seen. They can be very frightening; huge, dark, humanoid apparitions. But, as long as the witness keeps a cool head, the artificial "monster" is unmasked by the fact that its movements mimic their own – just like a shadow.

So how did a soldier think that the Grey Man was charging him, and why did both he and Collie experience such a creature in the same place, fifty years apart? Collie's experience, and those of many climbers since, did not even involve seeing the Grey Man. He heard and felt its dreadful presence.

Brocken Spectres do not make a noise like footsteps and neither do they cause one to experience a powerful and totally irrational terror.

Bigfoot or Sasquatch (it is called different things by different Native-American tribes) is not as tall. Most reports put the North American hominid at between six and nine feet, with ape-like features and reddish-brown to brown hair or fur. The beings have been seen in almost all wooded and wild areas of North America.

Another famous American creature is the so-called Mothman which has similarities to many half-man, half animal creatures reported around the world (see the Jiangshi). The Mothman was first reported in Point Pleasant, West Virginia in 1966 when several people saw a large creature that was half-man, half bird. John Keel wrote the story into mainstream folklore in his book *The Mothman Prophesies* which was published in 1975. In November 1966 a group of gravediggers said they saw a huge, man-sized creature fly over their heads. Very shortly afterwards some people driving in a car saw a similar apparition whose eyes glowed red. They described it as a large, flying man with ten-foot wings. Biologists surmise that the creature was a Sandhill Crane – a bird which can stand as tall as a man and which has very large wings. The crane is not normally seen in this area so would have surprised locals.

So, again, maybe … maybe not.

The good people of West Virginia have had more than their fair share of encounters with strange creatures. In Braxton County, in 1952, a small group of people ran into what has become known as the Flatwood Monster. It all began at about 7.15pm on the evening of September 12, when three lads, the May brothers, Edward and Fred, together with a friend called Tommy Hyer, watched an object cross the sky and appear to land in a neighbouring farmer’s field. The boys ran home and told their mother, Kathleen May, and she, plus

two other local children, and a National Guardsman called Eugene Lemon sallied out to investigate. The little posse of two adults and five children topped a hill from which they said they saw a pulsing red light. Lemon shone his flashlight towards the light and illuminated a tall, human-like creature. It had a round, red face and what seemed to be a pointed hood. The mother said that it had claw-like hands. At that moment the figure started to glide towards the group, hissing as it came. Evidently Lemon yelped and the whole group took to their heels. Their story became national news, but sceptics believe that they saw a meteor, some aircraft recognition lights, and perhaps an owl. But, yet again, the coincidence of something in the sky with some form of monster chimes with many other similar stories – including several from the annals of the Skinwalker Ranch.

The Chinese and several Asian nations also have their own monster. A hopping vampire called *Jiangshi* which hops around with its arms outstretched. It kills people and sucks out their life force (presumably their blood).

**

The fascinating thing about paranormal creatures is that they vary immensely in type, size and characteristics. Some, possibly most, may be misperceptions by frightened humans which then become embellished and inflated to become folk-tales. It’s impossible to say for sure. Some psychologists would argue that all of them are the products of frightened minds and the social need for salutary lessons for children to stop them wandering off into the woods. An example might be the Krampus. The Austrians, Czechs, and several other neighbouring nations have this legend. The devil-like creature is said to act as the anti-Santa. At Yule – the winter

solstice – the Krampus comes to punish children who have not been good over the past year. For this purpose, it is portrayed as carrying birch rods. The rationale behind Krampus, the opposite of that behind Santa Claus, is pretty obvious, but it is yet another example of a demonic creature with supernatural powers. Krampus may have been invented by sorely tried parents long ago, but who knows?

Monsters may be purely fictitious, or they may be part of, or based on, a huge paranormal universe which we do not yet understand. The Loch Ness Monster, the Abominable Snowman, Mokele-Mbebe, Bigfoot, dragons, werewolves, vampires, ghost dogs (Fenrir), the Scottish Grey Man and Kelpie, ogres, orcs, trolls, unicorns, wyverns, griffons, goblins, gremlins, elves, fairies, and many more might have all been invented by bored humans wanting to liven up a long, winter's night, but when we laugh and cast a furtive glance into that shadowy corner by the door, are we really certain? Might many of these things be real, or at the very least have been prompted by genuine experiences?

Possibly. But we know that UFOs are often associated with weird creatures and if we are correct that there may indeed be different worlds and dimensions and that the universe may contain races that are many thousands or millions of years our senior, who is really to say?

**

Physics and metaphysics are converging. Our understanding of what constitutes the UFO phenomenon might be expanding to occupy parts of both fields. This part of the book has tried to challenge our embedded perceptions, to demonstrate the limits of science, the degree to which physics is beginning to enter unpredictable, metaphysical arenas, and the possibility (no more than

that) that our understanding of myth and legend, particularly where it concerns the barriers between dimensions and worlds, may provide clues as to how they arose.

The paranormal – from UFOs to Bigfoot – is a subject which has hitherto been treated as a series of completely separate domains. Some of what UFOs teach us and much of what lies in the weirder aspects of the paranormal may, however, be closer than we have ever suspected.

Chapter 21

Signposts in the Desert

Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future
And time future contained in time past.

T S Eliot - Four Quartets

Signposts in the Desert - that's what studying this subject sometimes feels like. Wandering a vast desert, guided (or misguided) by large signposts and placards everywhere you turn. The brightly coloured signs point in different directions to destinations such as "Flying Saucers", "Conspiracies", "Mutilations", "Mental Images", "Orange Spheres", "Monsters", "Abductions", "Triangular UFOs", "UFOs in the Water", "Portals" and so on. Scores of them scattered around and all claiming that they know the way to the ultimate source of truth. It's a surreal place and one very quickly begins to doubt one's sanity. Is any of it real or is it all a dream? Most people are happy to ignore it all and follow the sign labelled "The Known Universe" which points to comforting, material "truths".

In a sense the only signs which lead to areas of high probability are those pointing to UFOs. There are thousands of UFO sightings for which there are no plausible scientific answers and the recent US Navy evidence makes it 99.9% certain that such an anomaly exists. Airline pilots, military test pilots,

air traffic controllers, police officers, and even highly decorated astronauts, all report the same sort of things[110] over decades and across the globe. None of these witnesses exhibit the slightest signs of being deranged, delusional or dishonest – and even if one of them was stark-raving mad that would not undermine the others.

So, from the outsider's standpoint it's clear that there definitely are inexplicable UFOs – thousands of them every year around the world. We know that there are almost as many theories as to what they are, as there are UFOs. They are real, physical objects; they are thought projections; they are objects from another dimension; they are time travellers. Whatever they are, the owners of these things can defy gravity by flying and hovering without aerofoils. They can vanquish inertia by stopping and accelerating almost instantaneously and making ninety degree turns. They appear to be able to travel underwater at high speed, move without emitting any sound and often without disturbing the very air itself. Airline pilots report that objects miss their aircraft by very short distances without leaving a wake or creating air turbulence. Fishermen have reported them emerging from water without the water cascading off them as it would from any other object lifted out of a body of water.

The objects seem to be able to avoid interactions with the material world around them with the possible exception of reflecting and emitting light. Are they moving in a slightly different dimension which, like a misdialled radio frequency, is not quite on the band we are on but just to one side? So, visible but not actually "here"?

However, at the start of this book, we wanted answers to some pretty fundamental questions. So, let's set aside the weirder aspects of the subject for the time being and take a look at some possible answers. The questions are: how did these things find us? why are they here? why are so many of

them sighted? And why are they so conspicuous?

How did they find us?

Maybe they didn't need to find us. Perhaps the objects are from another dimension or time but from this specific point in space. But let's assume for the moment that at least some of these objects and lights are visiting the Earth from other solar systems or galaxies. Under this assumption the favourite question of the sceptics is: How did they find us?

The famous Fermi Paradox starts from the basic assumption that no-one has found us and seeks explanations as to how that could be the case when there are so many reasons to conclude that there are possibly thousands of advanced species in the universe. But, as I have said, the "paradox" may simply not exist. Who says that "they" have not found us?

But, to begin from another angle, why are they flying around a tiny planet in a galaxy of perhaps one hundred billion stars and possibly three hundred billion planets? If the objects come from another galaxy then the odds shoot up. There are a billion trillion galaxies in the known universe and our tiny Earth is just one planet in around (at least) three with thirty-two zeros planets. So, the sceptics are right to ask the killer question for the whole subject: How did they find us in all that immensity?

Given the sheer size of the universe and Einstein's light-speed limit, they say, it's obvious they didn't. It's an impossibility and therefore the whole UFO question is simply one of puzzling out why so many people can be so deluded. They also point to the lack of success of our long-standing SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) efforts. If there are intelligences out there, why haven't we picked up their electromagnetic signals?

It's true, in spite of many years of listening, we have yet to record any

evidence at all of *intelligent* radio traffic from our own or from distant galaxies. For the sceptics this is “job done”; UFOs totally debunked. Their conclusions do, however, need to be questioned. Take just our own galaxy, the good-old Milky Way. It’s roughly 100,000 light years across. If you flashed a powerful-enough torch from one edge towards the other, it would take 100,000 years before the people on the other side saw your signal.

We can be fairly sure that any other advanced civilisations in the Milky Way – if they exist – will be at roughly the same distance from the centre as ourselves due to radiation and gravity issues at the core (there’s a big, evil Black Hole there). So, the chances are they are going to be somewhere between (say) 5,000 and 100,000 light years from us (they could be closer but probably not given the SETI failure). Let’s assume that a more advanced civilisation invented radio a couple of thousand years ago and have been merrily talking to each other by radio and transmitting advertising-slots since then. Shouldn’t we have heard from them by now? The answer is no. For us to listen the their very first radio transmissions – assuming they were strong enough - we’d have to wait for between 3,000 years and 98,000 years before those radio waves reach us.

Our nearest neighbouring star systems are between four and fifty light years away. If a technological civilisation exists in those star systems, we should have received their radio signals by now. SETI’s “failure” simply means that there are probably no technological civilisations within a hundred light years of us. That would be a sphere whose diameter would be one-two-hundredth of the width of the Milky Way.

What we’re saying is that it is unlikely that SETI will be successful for a long, long time to come and that, even if it were, it would only prove that a technological civilisation reached our own levels of maturity (?) many thousands of years ago. But that still doesn’t answer the question about how

“they” found us.

Almost certainly not by being attracted by our radio signals. If we take a rough 120-year span since humans began emitting radio waves, those waves, significantly weakened by attenuation, may have travelled a little bit less than 120 light years in a galaxy 100,000 light years across. So, it’s highly unlikely that an advanced civilisation in the Milky Way has found us by transmissions of the “I Love Lucy” show, and it’s impossible that inhabitants of a distant galaxy will have done so.

We have to remember that, *if* things are visiting us from distant stars or galaxies, their civilisations are likely to be much more advanced than our own; possibly by many thousands or even millions of years (the really scary news is that some could be a billion or two years older). If that were the case, the chances are that they developed super-advanced technologies many thousands of years ago and gave up using the electromagnetic spectrum (of which radio is part) well before humans were thought of[111].

There are currently plans on the table to send millions of tiny chips to the nearest solar system. The idea is for these tiny chips to explore a totally different solar system for the very first time. NASA also has a draft plan on the table to launch a probe to the same destination in 2069. Our nearest stellar neighbours are the three stars in the Alpha Centauri system. They are “only” about 4.4 light years away – so certainly within sugar-borrowing range. The idea is to send the probe, and those chips, at a speed which is a good fraction of light speed, then wait for forty-five years while they get there, wait a few years while they explore, then wait again for almost five years until their return radio transmissions reach us. We can then marvel at the wonders of a new solar system. Make a note in your diary, pictures of strange suns and weird planets should be up on the internet sometime in the year 2124.

When humanity develops star-probes that work at 99% of the speed of

light we'll be able to send humans on two-hundred-year expeditions to stars in a 198 light year sphere around our planet. Still only a tiny fraction of the 100,000 light-year span of our own home galaxy and we've not even started to think about the rest of the billion, trillion galaxies in the known universe.

Nevertheless, if we scale that plan up with many thousands of years' more development, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that a distant civilisation mapped ours and other galaxies by using trillions and trillions of small autonomous, possibly self-replicating spacecraft, each capable of reaching destinations faster than the speed of light.

Given faster than light travel and mastery of gravity and inertia these drones would have mapped an entire galaxy within a Solar year. Completing a map of the entire known universe would take much longer[112] but who is saying that there is only one civilisation that has managed to become super-advanced, and who's to say that the universe has yet been fully explored even by those super-eggheads?

Statistically, it's entirely possible that a single drone of several million sent to the Milky Way many thousands of years ago, cruised into our solar system and discovered a beautiful planet – third from the Sun. The quantum message it flashed home would have rung a bell somewhere in the depths of their bureaucracy.

> *'Forgive me for interrupting your meditation, Madam, but the drones have found another "possible".'*
>
> *A creature floating about fifteen feet below the wave-ruffled surface, stirred and cast a baleful glance towards her tormentor. 'And what is it this time? Methane? Sulfuric acid clouds, a liquid nitrogen ocean? We have around ten thousand such discoveries. They are useless to us and should simply be passed on to one of the races who actually enjoy such*

conditions. Let me go back to my thoughts.'

'Madam, this one is a water world!'

This time the medium-ranked civil servant with a penchant for peace and quiet not only stirred – she suddenly thrashed towards the minion, halting inches before his calm features. 'But that's wonderful. We've only found three water-worlds in all the time we've been searching. I'll get promotion for this.'

'Well, it's not a water-world in the same way as ours or the others. This one is only two-thirds water. But the sensor readings show good depths, plentiful life, and a very interesting seasonal relationship with its star.'

His senior frowned – if that is what one would call a wrinkling of the area above the gills. 'The atmosphere?'

'Nitrogen, oxygen and carbon dioxide with lots of trace gases.'

'Any life forms on the land?'

'As far as the drone can tell there are millions of species of which an ugly, air-breathing thing that manoeuvres on two legs appears to be the most intelligent. But that's not saying much.' He flashed a picture into his boss's mind.

'Ughh. We've seen some of those before on a couple of other worlds. Disgustingly weak and fragile. What of the water-life?'

He flashed more pictures.

'Oh, wonderful. Those large things are almost like our own Suvbrids – graceful, with obvious signs of a civilised intelligence.'

'What are your orders Madam?'

She gave him a calculating grin.

'I will inform the Council, and I am certain they will want to claim the water for our race. For the rest – those gas-breathing monstrosities

– we will probably pass the news on to a few of the gas-breathing races and they can divide it up as they please.' She thought a moment longer. 'Well done, Hessish. I will ask for part of the water area to be named after yourself. The new planet will of course be named after me.'

We'd been found, but what would a super-advanced civilisation do about it? What would we, ourselves, do in such circumstances? We'd send further probes to find out more about any life forms. Human beings like to know how things tick and there's absolutely no reason why another civilisation out there – whatever way they live and breathe – is not the same.

It is very likely that the owners of those drones would explore further and, on a wider canvas, institute a long-term exploration and study programme without disturbing the newly-discovered planet any more than absolutely necessary. They might also seek to test the more intelligent species on the planet with some stimuli – perhaps fly around in full sight and see what happens?

We should not ignore the possibility that these civilisations are, in fact, already here on the Earth. They could be from another version of the Earth or from another dimension, or from the future. It sounds preposterous but all of them are possibilities based on solid scientific grounds. There's a finite possibility that *Men in Black* got closer to the truth than we might imagine and that we are, in fact, the tourist destination of choice for half the universe.

So, could advanced civilisations have found us? Absolutely. In all probability, a long time ago. At the start of this book I calculated statistically that there might be around three million such civilisations out there. Even if there are just a few hundred or a few score, they will be thousands of years ahead of us.

The answer to the question: How did they find us? is, therefore …

probably pretty easily. And what we have not taken into account is the possibility – one puts it no stronger – that the universe itself "knows" where we are. Imagine that the field of consciousness (if it exists) is like a huge, darkened building the size of the Pentagon. If a searcher tried to locate humans within the building by "travelling" to them and touching them, it would take forever. But if that person had a powerful infra-red camera, they could locate every single person in the huge building in a matter of minutes.

Why are they here?

Assuming that one or more civilisations have found the Earth – why are their objects continually scooting around in our atmosphere and water?

When flying saucers were first properly noticed and recorded in modern times there were serious theories that they were here to conquer the Earth and enslave its inhabitants. Those ideas have dissipated over the decades, primarily because nothing appears to have happened. Objects continue to be seen in their thousands every year but not one, to my knowledge, has even so much as initiated formal communications[113]. The White House, Buckingham Palace, Versailles, the Reichstag, the Kremlin have all, so far, escaped being blasted to rubble by alien death rays, and, again to my knowledge, not a single human soldier has had his head eaten and no aircraft has been disintegrated by an advanced spaceship.

This is almost certainly why governments around the world effect an air of total unconcern about the subject. They may know almost as little about UFOs as their citizens, but they are pretty sure that UFOs are not an immediate danger to humankind; and this probably should not surprise us. The standard government line is that "UFOs are of no defence significance". Not "UFOs are non-existent". The powers-that-be seem to be sure that we do not need to protect ourselves against UFOs.

If a civilisation is so advanced that it can ignore space, gravity, inertia and possibly even time, why would it need slaves, or the resources of a tiny planet like the Earth? Even in a single galaxy there are probably three million, million other planets they can mine for resources (including water), and – as even little old us are looking to a future where robots do the hard work – they've almost certainly got robots which last longer and work a sight harder than humans could.

Consequently, I think we're safe in assuming that distant civilisations are not after our bodies or our backyards. Which still leaves the question: if they don't want slaves or resources, why are they flitting around?

Here are a few possible reasons:

Long term study of a particular type of planet. We're probably quite unusual in being a double planet (Earth and Moon being of such comparable sizes) and, of course, being a "water world".

Long term study of different types of lifeform. Perhaps our planet is unusual in being essentially life-soup; our atmosphere and water simply teem with microbes, a wide variety of animate species, and some interesting higher life forms like dolphins, whales and primates. Such research would have to take place across many disciplines – biology, micro-biology, botany, anthropology, sociology, psychology, history, philosophy, and so on. It could involve sampling and even DNA cloning, or DNA manipulation.

Long term study of technological development – a fascinating study of a primitive primate species developing tools and mechanisms, then proceeding to explore higher physics and astrophysics, and not

forgetting working hard to destroy the planet they live on.

Perhaps a psycho-social piece of research into an aggressive species which cannot seem to cooperate and which, even at village or school playground level, seems always to be able to find an "out-group" to despise, pity, or attack.

Tourism. We explore the Moon and Mars for scientific reasons at present, but, all-being-well, people will want to visit for tourist purposes in years to come. Imagine what research and tourism we, ourselves, would be involved in if we discovered small animals floating around in the Venusian atmosphere – capable of breathing toxic chemicals and of surviving under immense pressures. Might the same curiosity and motivations apply to advanced civilisations where we are concerned?

Do they actually live here? There are plenty of researchers who would argue that they do. That aliens species inhabit parts of remote areas of the land and oceans for purposes unknown.

Eradication/Enslavement – it's still a possibility but one would think whoever they are would have already wiped us out or enslaved us if either were a serious objective.

Any and all of these would be good and sufficient reason for an advanced race wanting to visit the Earth and its solar system over an extended period. And the extended period? Possibly hundreds or thousands of years. Why not? One has to assume that any set of advanced races might have the same

attitude towards developing civilisations as we do towards less advanced peoples on Earth – i.e. nowadays we try to leave them to their own devices as much as possible. That particular possibility is complicated by the "Why the lights?" question, but we'll come to that in a moment.

Why so many?

There are lots of sightings of strange lights and objects in any given year. I've calculated that there are at least 60,000 to 120,000 *sightings* per year across the globe. But the vast majority of these will be explicable in prosaic terms, leaving perhaps 3,000 to 6,000 observations a year which cannot yet be explained within our current understanding of science and the universe. It's not that many. Compare the estimates with the fact that there are around 55 million aircraft flights per year.

Taking the upper estimate of 6,000 totally unexplainable objects in our skies and seas it would equate to an average of around thirty per nation per year. Different shapes and sizes, different coloured lights, different behaviours – all suggest different owners and sources, but the overall numbers are not that large. Out of all the global sightings which are inexplicable, probably around 1,000 are seen across North America and perhaps the same across Europe.

That's not a huge figure, but the final question is critical: why are these objects quite so conspicuous?

Why so blatant?

This is what we oldies used to call the *$64,000 Question*. It was, and is, asked by ardent sceptics and is neatly summed up by Philip Klass' famous conundrum:

If there are UFOs and they want to make themselves known, land! And if they don't want to make their visits known, turn off the lights!

It's as pertinent today as it was several decades ago when Klass first coined it. If the core assumptions of this section are correct, and there really are advanced civilisations visiting and possibly studying the Earth, we would have every right to also assume that their technology would allow them to do so without being noticed. Indeed, if their ethics demand that they disturb the natives as little as possible, you would think it essential that they carried out their tasks as unobtrusively as possible.

Our own scientists and engineers have already developed prototype surveillance drones that are insect sized. In fifty years, such things might well be commonplace. So, if we can do it now, what types of surveillance systems might an advanced species have at their disposal?

Logically, there is no reason why physical craft – ranging from inches across to a mile long – should be needed to research any planet and its inhabitants. We've done a pretty good job in our own solar system with robot probes of only a few feet across. In fifty years, humans might be able to do this with tiny, almost invisible, drones. Who knows what capabilities a civilisation, thousands of years our senior, might have.

The question remains, therefore: Why so obvious?

There would seem to be a number of possible reasons why these putative races would choose to visit the Earth in so obvious a manner and in physical craft which give every appearance of being piloted by real creatures.

They don't care about being seen because they know that we simply do not believe our own eyes;

The physical craft are totally unnecessary but are being used (or projected) in order to stimulate human thought and investigations;

The objects are necessary for creatures to travel in and are being made visible for the same reason as #2 above;

Whoever owns the objects has no choice. They haven't learned to miniaturise their technology or to dim the lights.

Number four seems pretty unbelievable but the lights are a genuine puzzle. It's as though the objects want to be seen day and night. But another question might focus on the fact that visible light is simply a small part of the entire electromagnetic spectrum. And it just happens to be the only part of that spectrum that humans can easily sense. Could the objects therefore be using visible light in the same way that road workers use hi-vis jackets – to make *sure* they are seen.

Why do they want to be seen but are not prepared to land and get fully involved with negotiations with our governments? The lights may simply be calculated to stimulate thought and research and to draw attention to an anomaly. Alternatively, visible light may simply be an unavoidable by-product of their propulsion systems. But we have proposed super-advanced races and one cannot imagine that such a race would find it impossible to mask visible light even if it is something that their propulsion systems necessarily produce.

The most obvious answer, and the most likely, is that the lights and the shapes and possibly even the antics of these "objects" are very deliberately designed to attract attention, to provoke and to stimulate for reasons which, at present, we can only guess.

Do governments know?

There are UFO conspiracy theories coming out of our ears. Read any of the top UFO organisations' websites. Governments have their own UFOs, they have met and negotiated with aliens, they are covering up alien bases on the Earth, alien bodies are, at this very moment, lying in US government morgues – the theories go on and on. The really scary thing is that, ludicrous as they sound, many of these possibilities are credible.

We know that many governments – US, UK, France, Canada, Australia, Russia, China, Chile, Brazil, and more – take a genuine, albeit behind-closed-doors, interest in the subject. We know that information is sometimes dribbled out to the wider public. Conspiracy-theorists believe this is all "disinformation". The arguments have led to decades of increasingly hysterical email and social media discussion on whatever conspiracy theory happens to be the flavour of the day.

But, just as the Roswell case hangs very much on the very first press-release and the question: Why was it written and released? so the role of governments in the UFO saga may hang on the question: Why do they keep saying that UFOs are of no defence significance?

"Of no defence significance" is invariably the answer given by governments all over the world when asked to comment on a UFO sighting and why they appear not to be interested. It is a significant point that governments – especially these days – do not say "UFOs don't exist" or "stop talking nonsense, there is no such thing as an alien spaceship". Just the very carefully worded "UFOs are of no defence significance". It's almost as though an alien somewhere has told a government that they are not here to destroy the world and enslave its inhabitants. Thus the only thing that any government can honestly say is that we do not need to defend against UFOs.

Governments attempt to give the impression that the whole subject is the domain of total whackos. So why do they not simply tell their publics that UFOs do not exist? Sufficient high profile and academic statements over the past seventy years, delivered in a calm and reasoned manner, would have almost certainly calmed the whole subject down. Could it perhaps be that they know? Or is it that they are not sure and are hedging their bets?

If I was a betting man I'd put a lot of money on the possibility that governments know very well that UFOs exist and spend quite a bit of time tracking them and monitoring their activity when they can. But it's as though they also know that, whatever UFOs are, they are not there to hurt us or to invade us and that they are so far ahead of us that we are like Pacific islanders when the west came calling in the eighteenth century – powerless to do anything about it.

Remember what the Tic-Tac report said:

> ***technology not currently in the possession of the US or any other nation***

It makes sense therefore that governments, no matter how much they actually know, would deny UFOs and cover them up where possible. They can't have their citizens panicking or losing faith in their government's ability to defend them, so, rather than admit that we can't do a thing to stop the UFOs in their nefarious machinations, they deny everything and simply watch. If you think about it in those terms there's not much else they can do and still hold their heads up when elections come along.

Let's take a look at some possibilities and score them on a one to ten scale where 1 is a totally unlikely possibility (verging on the impossible) and 10 is something that is almost certainly the case.

Certain governments know everything. They've had contact with aliens and even managed to get hold of some alien technology. They cannot do anything about UFOs but they can secretly enjoy some of the technology.
The people who subscribe to this theory tend to forget just how far ahead of us UFO technology is likely to be. Giving a western government a genuine alien spacecraft would probably be akin to supplying a video game console to a lost tribe in the Amazon rainforest.
Probability: Highly unlikely/hasn't happened.
Score: between 0 and 1.

Certain governments know a great deal. They know that aliens exist, they know that UFOs are skimming all over the planet; and they have worked out the probable reasons. The problem is they can't do a single thing about it.
Probability: Quite possible but why hasn't more information slipped out about this?
Score: somewhere between 3 and 6.

Governments know some things but not everything. They have more information than we do, but not much more. They still don't understand why or how. They don't want to look powerless and stupid, so they keep their mouths shut. In the meantime, if they can learn anything about the objects, their propulsion, and their science, they will steal a huge march on their "enemies". In northern England they would say "when in doubt, say nowt".
Probability: Very possible.

Score: between 7 and 9.

Governments know only what we know. They are as baffled as the general public – so the last strategy applies: keep quiet.
Probability: In view of the number of times governments appear to have covered up sightings, retained photos, and suppressed reports, this is probably less likely than number 3.
Score: somewhere between 4 and 6.

Do governments know that a proportion of UFOs are inexplicable, and that they are probably not of this Earth? Yes, without a shred of doubt. In spite of what we may think, governments are not completely stupid.

Do some government agencies know more than the general public about UFOs? Yes, indubitably, but it may be that the communications between agencies are not as good as they could be. The reader should note the serious disputes and bickering which went on the in the British government between its UFO officials and the Defence Intelligence staff in the late 2000s. It's entirely possible that Christopher Mellon's plea for "joined up" action within the US government has yet to be acted-upon.

Do one or more governments possess operational UFOs with highly advanced technical capabilities? Possible but the chances of them actually understanding the technology, being able to develop and fly such objects, and keep it all secret are close to zero (see the section on the US Navy sightings). If a government possessed the power to defy gravity and ignore inertia does anyone seriously believe they would not use it on a very wide scale? Let's just assume that the US government has known the operational technology behind UFOs for a few decades. Would they really have wasted time, energy and lives throwing crude reaction rockets into space? Would the temptation

to have US colonies on the Moon, Mars and several other planets and moons have been resisted?

I think we have to say this would be highly unlikely.

Do governments, nevertheless, wish to keep the whole UFO issue under wraps and to reinforce the humorous, disdainful way the media treats it? Most definitely. If you don't know the answer, you certainly do not want your constituents asking the question. And if you suspect enough to know that the answer will be epoch-changing and might undermine everything you stand for, that's even more reason to make sure that it all gets treated as an hilarious joke or a subject for discussion only within an asylum.

Part 5

What are they?

I'd like to have flown one of those

Commander David Fravor; F-18 pilot; 2004

I believe the objects that I saw at close quarter were extraterrestrial in origin

Lt Col Charles Halt – notarised statement 2010 concerning his 1980 sighting

We have nothing that can do what that object did

Captain Phil Schultz, TWA Flight 842, 1981

Keeping an aircraft in the air requires a significant amount of energy. With the speeds we observed, 12 hours in the air is 11 hours longer than we'd expect

Lt Ryan Graves, US Navy, 2019

Chapter 22

From our Mole – 5

The speaking room was full of both real and virtual attendees but was almost completely silent. Beings from over a hundred species waited patiently for the Elders to begin. The atmosphere buzzed with anticipation. Universal meetings happened infrequently and some of those present had never attended one before.

There was a deep, bass rumble as the quantum shields were erected to ensure total privacy. Then, one of the Elders spoke. It was not speech as we know it but an instantaneous communication into the minds of those present and those virtually present.

"Welcome. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss progress on one of our flagship projects – the planet T459291, or Earth as the main inhabitants have named it. It's a name that somewhat lacks imagination but, aside from that fact being a reliable indication of the average intelligence, that's not a problem for us.

"Over the course of this meeting we will hear reports from seventeen separate experiments and from around twenty observation teams. However, we know that many of you will not have attended an "Earth Review" before, so we will begin with questions from those beings."

The pause was brief before a squat being with a heavy beard and pointed ears asked:

"Silly question I know, but why are we even interested in this planet? There are far more interesting geological problems on a thousand other planets."

"That is true but the interest of the Council in this planet is more to do

with its sentient inhabitants that any unusual features of geology or meteorology."

"I hesitate to question the Elders' judgement but the 'humans' are nothing special and are so primitive they'd not even understand how this meeting is being held."

"What you say is correct but our decision XC7189417/632 was that we would monitor and investigate this species on the basis that it is one of pitifully few young sentient civilisations in this galaxy. At present, as you will be aware, there are only around three hundred advanced civilisations and we have records of just eighty-five "candidate ones" in around twenty galaxies. We cannot afford to waste any opportunity to see new sentient life forms develop towards maturity. Earth and three other planets are the only likely candidates at present."

At that point one of the virtual delegates took over. Its voice was a staccato series of clicks and chirps which were translated into everyone's head instantaneously.

"But, Revered Elder, as I remember it, the last Earth Review was highly concerned with the gradual slide of these aggressive beings towards nuclear annihilation. What if they destroy themselves? Should we prevent that, on the basis that they are one of a very few young sentient life-forms?"

"No. Absolutely not. We are barred from saving them if they manage to get themselves into a position of self-destruction. I do not have to remind you that nuclear destruction is not the only – or even the most urgent – danger the planet faces. The loss of the planet itself would be regrettable but there are quite a few similar, water-worlds out there and it will not be an irremediable disaster. If humans destroy themselves, or even if they merely set themselves back several thousand years, we will have to re-seed them on another similar world. Planet T9225534 comes to mind. We have been

storing genetic material for centuries and have millions upon millions of samples."

"Millions of samples? Don't the humans suspect anything?"

"Not at all. Only one of them in a hundred-thousand samplings ever remembers the procedure in any way, and their fellows never believe them. The samples are safe and, as Experimental Team F665 will later tell us, they are categorised for a number of traits. For example, we could seed another water world with less aggressive, more intelligent humanoids with longer lifespans."

"I had not realised that our investigations and observations would permit such exciting experiments."

"There will be many things that you do not yet understand. But now we must start to address the detailed reports. Investigation team three will begin with its summary of technological advances since the last meeting. We last heard that they had progressed into crude reaction-based craft which could reach their moon and the nearest planets. Little appears to have developed in that area but perhaps the report will enlighten us about underlying scientific insights. Team 3 – is there any speeding up of their painfully slow progress with basic quantum physics?"

A crab-like being scurried into the area below the Council. 'I am sorry, Revered Elders, but I bring bad news. Not only has there been very little progress but there are increasing signs of progress being beyond their capabilities. Several times they have stumbled across the correct avenues but, on each occasion, they have either ignored them or failed to be able to see ways forward. The Team has concluded that their minds are too inflexible to be able to embrace radical approaches to their problems. Hence, all progress in these vital scientific areas is at an end. The creatures have, due to their rigid materialist culture, reached the limit of their ability.'

The dejection in his voice came across even in translation and the speaking room exploded with thousands of simultaneous telepathic expressions of wonder, disbelief and fear.

The Leading Elder signed for calm to be restored.

'What you have said is both fascinating and deeply disturbing. Once the meeting ends the Council of Elders will be considering as a matter of urgency a Section Two intervention.'

There was a general feeling of incomprehension among the delegates.

'I apologise. Most of you will never have heard of such a thing. Such an intervention is most unusual. While we are not permitted to interfere in the general development of the species, intervention is permitted by Section Two of the Inter-Galactic Code in conditions such as present themselves on this planet – the blocking of capability by cultural or political factors. For those who do not know, we carried out a Section Two intervention on this planet some 40,000 years ago by applying a small DNA change. This resulted in much greater creative ability and particularly the use of symbols. In the light of the creatures' having apparently worked themselves into a materialist dead-end, the Council will discuss whether it is appropriate to use Section Two again to amend the creatures' DNA a little more.'

He paused and acknowledged the subsequent thoughts.

'Yes. That is correct. There would, indeed, need to be a cull first.'

Chapter 23

What we know and don’t know

If you wish to upset the law that all crows are black, you mustn’t seek to show that no crows are black; it is enough if you prove one single crow to be white.

William James (US philosopher and psychologist; d 1910)

In this volume we’ve covered a great deal of territory, from “simple” UFOs, through some very strange UFOs, to the realms of the paranormal and universal consciousness. The scenery has been fascinating. However, now we come to the moment of truth; the point at which we have to answer the critical question: What are they?

Let’s review what we know and don’t know about the UFO phenomenon.

Whenever I speak to groups of people who know little about the subject I find that they generally believe it to be a mass of suppositions, beliefs, and wild, unsupported conclusions, all proposed by people who wear tin-foil hats to bed. These impressions have been reinforced by years of exposure to humorous press articles and pictures of little green men with antennae sticking out of their plexiglass space helmets. People’s views change radically once they are exposed to the fact that we actually know quite a lot about the topic and about the anomaly itself. More importantly, they sit up and take notice once they know that we can segment the evidence into categories like “very strong”, “strong” and “fairly strong”.

Very Strong Evidence

We can now be certain that an anomaly exists. We cannot explain it scientifically as yet but, as sure as eggs is eggs, it's there.

We know that there are several thousand currently inexplicable UFO reports every year.

A high proportion of the reports come from eminently believable witnesses – like civil and military pilots, police officers and air traffic controllers. The plausibility of these reports as a combined body of evidence is so high as to be unarguable.

We have mounds of evidence from a whole raft of electronic sensors going back to the 1950s and culminating with infra-red and other sensor data from the USS Princeton, the F/A-18s in 2004, and the F/A-18s in 2014-15.

We have solid evidence that the objects can do things that no Earth-made things can do: anti-gravity (flying without wings and able to hover without aerofoils); instantaneous acceleration and deceleration; doing hypersonic speeds without leaving vapour trails, sonic-booms or even air displacement; being extremely difficult to see/sense (usually only an indistinct "view" is achieved)[***[114]***].

Reports agree that the objects, as reported by witnesses, can be of very different sizes and shapes, and emit a wide variety of lights.

Strong Evidence

We have mounting evidence that these things interact with and even travel in bodies of water and can transition from space to air to water almost without pause.

We possess evidence from ordinary witnesses and from pilots that the objects seem to be able to move through air and water without seeming to interact in a physical sense with either.

Fairly Strong Evidence

We have good evidence now that, whatever the phenomenon is, it abducts humans for what seem to be temporary experiments.

A relatively large number of witnesses report telepathic contact with the objects and many say that certain objects – especially smaller globes – can stimulate strong feelings of either dread or pleasure.

There is fairly strong reason to link the objects that are seen with whatever it is that is carrying out strange mutilations of animals – tens of thousands of them.

The character of the lights which these objects emit is "strange" in that it is reported as being "pure" or "subtly different" to shades seen in our everyday lives.

Weak Evidence or Theory

We can model a statistical probability of advanced sentient life throughout the known universe which indicates that such life is a virtual certainty.

Given the probable age of such civilisations we can be pretty sure that they will be aware of life on Earth.

However, we suspect that a super-advanced civilisation would have the technology to be able to avoid obvious visits and lights if they wanted. That they do not should cause us to wonder at potential motives.

We have moved beyond the pure ETH (the extra-terrestrial hypothesis) and are now seriously considering hypotheses which include time travel and inter-dimensionality (the IDH) all of which tie in with the observed characteristics of the phenomenon and with the most recent findings and theories of our physicists.

There is increasing reason to conclude that the UFO anomaly may not be a single phenomenon but several similar but slightly different ones. UFOs may have different origins and possibly different purposes.

We are beginning to suspect a link between what we call the UFO phenomenon and other paranormal activities such as the appearance of very strange creatures.

Perhaps most importantly, science is now teaching us that such things

as faster-than-light travel, time travel, telepathy, the existence of multiple dimensions, our co-existence with many worlds, and more, particularly quantum effects, are firm possibilities.

Okay – that's what we know. What do we *not* know?

How long have you got? We do not know whether we are dealing with a physical phenomenon or a psychological, intangible, metaphysical one, or both. We don't know whether the objects come from a single source or many. We don't know why the objects are so visible and carry such a baffling array of lights. We don't know what the connection might be between visible UFOs and intangible paranormal activity such as that which bedevilled the Skinwalker Ranch. We are only just beginning to accept that we may be dealing with multiple phenomena with different causes and different sources. These could include multiple alien super-civilisations each with their own agenda, interdimensional or time travelling objects, and phenomena which are linked to dark-matter and zero-point energy or to the bits of the multiverse that we don't yet understand – i.e. 85 percent of it.

There's a strong possibility that there are multiple species out there that are very interested in our world. It is entirely possible that they are not following the same agenda and that some are friendly and some not. It could even be that one or more of them actually put us here and are assiduously breeding us towards an objective known only to themselves. A major disadvantage that we operate under is that we do not know how, if at all, we humans are connected to the wider universe.

So, where UFOs are concerned, we actually know a heck of a lot more than we did in the 1960s. Above all else we know for sure that there is a major anomaly in our world. Our libraries of evidence and knowledge are

increasing every year. But, that tiny amount of knowledge comes at a price. It has revealed the immense extent of our ignorance. After getting on for seventy years of UFO databasing and research it's not terribly impressive, but one can certainly say that we are making progress – albeit only as far as recognising the anomaly, admitting that it exists, and beginning – only beginning – to scope the extent of our incomprehension, the scale of the scientific and philosophical task which faces us.

Chapter 24

What does it mean?

The objects I observed tonight were NOT aircraft navigation lights, emergency lights, landing lights, helicopters, lighter-than-air craft, weather balloons, flares, Chinese lanterns, meteorological phenomena, satellites, swamp gas, or any other nonsense … These were real, solid objects and appeared to maneuver under intelligent control. I'm still shaking from what I saw more than an hour and a half ago.

Ex-airline pilot, Castle Rock near Seattle, Wa, 2012

On a model where the visible universe would be the size of the USA, the Earth would be invisible even with an electron microscope!

Hynek, J. Allen, Vallée, Jacques; The Edge of Reality: A Progress Report on Unidentified Flying Objects.

In the course of Volume 2, I've shown that inexplicable UFOs are still a major concern in the 21st century and that the phenomenon continues to throw up highly credible and compelling cases. I've also used the US Navy cases to show that UFOs most certainly exist and that the armed forces of the most powerful nation of Earth are taking it extremely seriously.

That's the easy bit. Added to all that it's clear that UFOs are almost

certainly not the cosy, mechanical spaceships we'd always thought – or at least not all of them. The past eighty years have delivered a goodly amount of evidence of strange objects and strange happenings. Research has produced some intriguing – not to say scary – possibilities associated with psychic powers, human abduction, animal mutilation, strange animals and humanoids, portals into other worlds, and even time travel.

Meanwhile, mainstream science is getting closer and closer to the sort of universe in which the things that UFO enthusiasts have long surmised, could actually be happening. String theory – M-Theory – has shifted from being a kook's dream to an accepted part of modern physics. We now understand that, at the quantum level, things are never simple "fact" – they are merely a set of probabilities that something may or may not happen or exist. Furthermore, we are now pretty sure that we are living in a multiverse of an infinite number of other universes in which everything that could happen, has happened. And, if that's not enough, there is a growing number of scientists who support the idea that time may not be the straight-line phenomenon we've all imagined it to be but, instead, may be folded up on itself so that all time – past, present and future – exists in one very weird lump.

In parallel with the spooky things being contemplated by physicists, we are beginning to suspect that there is far more to the UFO anomaly than we have suspected, and that, consequently, our way of looking at the world – purely through the lens of the scientific method and in reductionist terms, may not be the only way of acquiring and sifting knowledge and of interpreting what is happening around us. As science and the study of UFOs converge there is a strong likelihood that both will have to adjust their world-views and adopt a very different way of interpreting the universe in which we live.

UFOs are real. Things that we cannot yet explain are zipping around us on a regular basis. We've examined recent cases, we've looked at what they

could be. We've considered the possible answers to the question: What are they?

The most likely solution is that they are many things and from several different sources. We have no way of knowing how many of the unidentified aerial phenomena come from within our own universe, what proportion are inter-dimensional, and whether any could be time-travellers from a distant future. They are material, in the sense that they reflect light and can be touched, and insubstantial because they have the ability to avoid interaction with the air and water of our world, and they can sometimes appear and disappear at will. It is extremely likely, too, that they have, within them, the capacity to engage with things about which we have only extremely limited information – like psychic power. The phenomenon is possibly linked more closely to the energy field which makes up the bulk of the universe than to our own understanding of the material world, which we now know is not material at all.

There is certainly no doubt that UFOs are more than simply spaceships with a new form of propulsion. There is, in fact, every reason to conclude that they do not actually exist in our world – even though we can see them, and they buzz our aircraft. If that is the case, the answers we seek will not be mechanical, they will not emerge from our current understanding of science and electro-magnetism, and they will take a very long time to unravel. Unfortunately for our scientists, our scientifically-minded UFO researchers, and the military boffins who are currently trying to study the subject, the answers will only be possible if we adopt a more holistic approach to the study of UFOs. While continuing to develop our knowledge through the scientific method we also need an approach which comes at the subject from entirely the other direction: from an appreciation of the whole and what it may mean.

Fundamentally, science and philosophy must combine to develop an understanding of the universe which is not completely reductionist in nature, not built from narrow understandings of matter and space, but from a combination of science and metaphysics which also addresses the problem from an holistic point of view and works “down” to the role and purpose of UFOs. The issue of how time works and what it means in relation to our three-dimensional, material world is also crucial.

To be honest, I am not sure that science and philosophy can cooperate in this way in the modern world. How can science rediscover our links to the natural world and build an holistic empathy with the planet we live on? The past three hundred years have been characterised by the dominance of materialist western thought. Science has come to mean developing power by understanding tiny parts of the whole. The result has been knowledge linked to technology. Science as a discipline is so dependent on the concept of power from machines and gadgets that it may find it impossible to accommodate holistic approaches.

The answer to UFOs will be far more complex than that they are extra-terrestrial spaceships, far more challenging to our world-view than that they are subject to the laws of our existing science. If you see the UFO phenomenon as simply a string of physical objects and events which can be recorded and measured with conventional electromagnetic sensors I sincerely doubt that you will be getting any answers - ever. But, if you suspect that UFOs are part of a phenomenon that can communicate telepathically with humans, that may have a great deal to do with beings who can float through walls, that can appear and disappear at will, and that can be seen by humans and cameras and radars but do not interact with the air around them, I believe that our whole approach to the subject will need to change.

UFOs and the strange things that are attached to their apron-strings are

almost certainly part of the *real* universe – the 85% that we do not yet understand. They exhibit all the signs of being part of, or dependent upon, whatever it is that we call dark-matter and zero-point energy. They may have origins within that part of the universe which deals in dimensions and other worlds. To put it bluntly they will probably turn out to be things we cannot yet conceptualise – because we lack the necessary intellectual framework.

If you suspect that any of these things is happening, then the discussion about humanity's links to the universe is of the highest importance. The whole UFO phenomenon, as it has developed over the past thirty or forty years, begs us to question our reliance on the reductionist scientific process and to seek a different philosophical approach – one which merges reductionist science with a recognition of the potential interconnectedness of the entire universe, including ourselves and everything on this planet.

We are completely justified in studying UFOs from the ground up. This is what all good UFO organisations are doing, and is probably what the US, Russian, Chinese and UK governments are engaged in – trying to extract the secrets of anti-gravity, faster than light travel, and the mastery of inertia using our current science and technology. I strongly suspect, however, that they are all going to suffer the fate of the alchemists; all are doomed to fail because they do not have the necessary intellectual frame, the fundamental, holistic understanding of the way things work at that level.

UFOs are a real anomaly which may represent the tip of a paranormal iceberg, but the only way we are ever going to understand them is by utilising a triple mode approach:

studying them with the science at our disposal,

extending that science into the probabilistic sphere of

quantum chromodynamics, and,

in parallel, thinking about how the universe works, about its possible interconnectedness and the relationship between our being – our souls if you wish – and what the meaning is of 85% of what is around and within us but which we do not yet understand.

**

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

William Shakespeare; *Hamlet*

Bibliography

Alexander, John B, Ph.D; *UFOs: Myths, Conspiracies, and Realities*; St. Martin's Press; 2011

Andrews, Ann; Ritchie, Jean; *Abducted: The True Story of Alien Abduction in Rural England*; Headline Books; 1998

Berlitz, Charles; Moore, William; *The Roswell Incident* Fine Communications; 1997

Birnes, William J.; *UFO Hunters: Book One*; Tom Doherty Associates; 2013

Birnes, William J.; *UFO Hunters: Book Two*; Tom Doherty Associates; 2016

Cahill, Kelly; *Encounter: The True Story*; Harper Collins; 1997

Carey, Tom; Schmitt Donald; *Witness to Roswell; Unmasking the 60-year Cover-Up*; New Page Books; 2007

Carey, Tom; Schmitt Donald; *The Children of Roswell;* New Page Books; 2016

Chalker, Bill; *Hair of the Alien: DNA and Other Forensic Evidence of Alien Abductions*: Gallery Books, 2005

Clark, Jerome; *The UFO Encyclopaedia Volume 3*; 2011

Clarke, David; *How UFOs Conquered the World: The History of a Modern Myth;* Aurum Press; 2015

Cubitt, T S; Perez-Garcia, David; Wolf, Michael; *The Unsolvable Problem*; Scientific American; Oct 2018

Dolan, Richard; *UFOs for the 21st Century Mind: A Fresh Guide to an Ancient Mystery*; Richard Dolan Press; 2014

Feindt, Carl W.; *UFOs and Water: Physical Effects of UFOs on Water Through Accounts by Eyewitnesses*; Xlibris Corporation, 2010.

Friedman, Stanton; Berliner, Don; *Crash at Corona;* Marlowe & Co.; 1994

Fuller, John G; *The Interrupted Journey*; Dell Publishing; 1966

Graham, Robbie. *Silver Screen Saucers: Sorting Fact from Fantasy in Hollywood's UFO Movies*; White Crow Productions Ltd.; 2015

Good, Timothy; *A Need to Know: UFOs, the Military and Intelligence*; Pan Macmillan; 2006

Greer, Steven M. MD; *Unacknowledged: An Expose of the world's greatest secret;* A&M; 2017

Halliday, Ron.; *UFO Scotland: The Secret History of Scotland's UFO Phenomenon*; Black & White Publishing; 1998

Hancock, Graham; *Supernatural: Meetings with the Ancient Teachers of Mankind*; Cornerstone Digital; 2010

Hopkins, Budd; *Witnessed: The True Story of the Brooklyn Bridge UFO Abductions*; Pocket Books; 1996

Hopkins, Budd; *Intruders: The Incredible Visitations at Copley Woods*; Penguin; 1987

Hopkins, Budd; *Missing Time: A Documented Study of UFO Abductions*; Richard Mark Publications; 1981

Howe, Linda Moulton; *Linking Animal Mutilations and Human Abductions to Alien Life Forms*, Linda Moulton Howe Productions, 2014

Howe, Linda Moulton, *Glimpses of Other Realities, Vol. I: Facts & Eyewitnesses,"* Linda Moulton Howe Productions; 1994

Howe, Linda Moulton, *Glimpses of Other Realities, Vol. II: High Strangeness,"* Linda Moulton Howe Productions; 1994

Hynek, J. Allen; *Night Siege: The Hudson Valley UFO Sightings;* Llewellyn Publications; 1998

Hynek, J Allen & Vallée, Jacques; *The Edge of Reality*; Henry Regnery Company; 1975

Jacobs, David, Dr; *Secret Life: Firsthand, Documented Accounts of UFO Abductions*; Simon & Schuster; 1992

Jordan, Debbie & Mitchell, Kathy; *Abducted!: The Story of the Intruders Continues*; Dell Publishing; 1995

Kaku, Michio; *The Physics of the Impossible;* Doubleday; 2008

Kelleher, Colm A.; Hunt for the Skinwalker: Science Confronts the Unexplained at a Remote Ranch in Utah; Pocket Books; 2005

Keel, John; *The Mothman Prophesies*; 1975 (Hodder & Stoughton Edition 2013)

Leivsson, Eirik; *UFOs and Aliens: Exceptional Cases of Alien Contact;* Createspace; 2017.

Mack, John E; *Abduction: Human Encounters with Aliens;* Pocket Books; 1995

Mack, John E; *Passport to the Cosmos: Human Transformation and Alien Encounters*; Three Rivers; 2000

Marler, David; *Triangular UFOs – An Estimate of the Situation*; Richard Dolan Press; 2013

Marrs, Jim; *Crossfire;* Basic Books; 2013

Mezrich, Ben; *The 37th Parallel – the secret truth behind America's UFO highway*; Arrow; 2017

O'Brien, Christopher; *Stalking the Herd: Examining the Cattle Mutilation Mystery*; Adventures Unlimited Press; 2013

Radin, Dean; *Real Magic*; Harmony Books; 2018

Ramsay, Scot & Suzanne; *The Aztec UFO Incident;* New Page Books; 2016

Randle, Kevin; *Roswell in the 21st Century;* Speaking Volumes; 2016

Randle, Kevin; Schmitt, Don; *The UFO Crash at Roswell*; Avon Books; 1991

Redfern, Nick; *The Roswell UFO Conspiracy: Exposing A Shocking And Sinister Secret*; Lisa Hagan Books; 2017

Ruppelt, Edward J; *The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects*; 1956 (Ace; 1963 edition)

Salas, Robert; *Unidentified: The UFO Phenomenon*; New Page Books; 2014

Salisbury, Frank B.. *The Utah UFO Display: A Scientist Brings Reason and Logic to over 400 Sightings in Utah's Uintah Basin*; Cedar Fort, Inc.; 2010

Schmitt, Donald R.; *Cover-Up at Roswell*; New Page Books; 2017

Schulze, Glen; Powell, Robert; *Special Research Report Stephenville, Texas;*

MUFON

Sinclair, Paul. *Truth-Proof: The Truth That Leaves No Proof*; PBC Publishing; 2016

Stith, Geraldine; *Alien Legacy;* Authorhouse; 2007

Stith, Geraldine: *The Kelly Green Men: Alien Legacy Revisited*; Authorhouse; 2015

Targ, Russell, & Puthoff Harold E.; *Mind-Reach: Scientists Look at Psychic Abilities;* Hampton Road Publishing; 2005

Vallée, Jacques; *Messengers of Deception: UFO Contacts and Cults*; Daily Grail; 1979

Vallée, Jacques; *Passport to Magonia: From Folklore to Flying Saucers* . Daily Grail Publishing; 2015 Edition

About the Author

Following a short scholarship to Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, he completed a Bachelor's degree in Politics and Economics at the University of York and later, at the University of Cambridge, researched a Master's thesis on global trade in the aerospace industry.

His career has encompassed time in the aerospace sector, in marketing, in education, and in commercial research. He's written and contributed to around a dozen academic books, countless lengthy reports, and, of course Volume 1 in the Outsider's Guide series. His greatest professional love is research. His view is that there aren't that many jobs in which you get paid for having fun, but that's what research is like.

He lives with his wife in Yorkshire, England, where rabbits are still causing more problems than aliens (he hopes).

---

[1] Edward J Ruppelt; *The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects*; 1956

[2] https://airminded.org/2010/04/19/the-boer-war-in-airpower-history/

[3] Verne, Jules; *From the Earth to the Moon*; 1865 and Wells, H G; *War of the Worlds* 1897

[4] Clarke, David; How UFOs Conquered the World: The History of a Modern Myth

[5] Graham, Robbie; op cit.

[6] See Kevin Randle's blog on the subject containing sections of some original documents: http://kevinrandle.blogspot.co.uk/2009/11/hector-quintanill-and-socorro-ufo-part.html

[7] Great credit has to be given to a chap named Walter N. Webb, of the UFO Research Coalition. He managed to acquire copies of the FAA voice tapes of the conversation between the plane and the controllers. He did a good deal of additional research and interviewed the crew and air traffic controllers.

[8] A segment of the voice tapes has been put online by NICAP at http://www.nicap.org/audio/950525.mp3

[9] MUFON (Mutual UFO Network) Case # 31851, Log # US-09162011-0014.

[10] http://www.ufosightingsdaily.com/2014/01/this-day-in-ufo-history-jan-15-2004.html (try to ignore the sillier stuff and the automatic assumption that these are "craft" or clear evidence of extra-terrestrial visitors)

[11] The main story was carried in the Daily Telegraph (a serious British broadsheet) *Police chase UFO over Cardiff*; Laura Clout 20 Jun 2008 Daily Telegraph.

[12] RAF St Athan was established as a technical training base in the 1930s and is still tasked with that role (in 2018 it celebrated its eightieth birthday). However the RAF and British Army presence at St Athan is being scaled down and a new Aston Martin factory is being constructed there to build the DBX luxury speedster.

[13] http://www.ufocasebook.com/vid/videocardiffwales2008.html

[14] On its website BUFORA has a satellite-view diagram of the UFO's track plus the drawings of the object made by the witnesses.

[15] http://www.ufocasebook.com/2010/paplaneufo.html

[16] http://www.mufon.com/2014-annual-report.html

[17] According to the Daily Telegraph of February 18, 2010 it was flight BA 5061 - Captain Roger Wills; First Officer Mark Stuart.

[18] Air Miss Report 2/95, dated February 2 1996

[19] On February 18 2010, the Daily Telegraph reported the crew of BA 5061 as comprising Captain Roger Wills and First Officer Mark Stuart.

[20] Halstead Gazette, Jan. 12, 2001

[21] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DeAZpU9dFT8

[22] Two of the initial videos cane be seen at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=27Ip7vqqJBE and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tysuz2OTO3k. The TV programme can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baQa0GRAS6M. Dr Roger Leir: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ku4lWqeFiM

[23] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z1IubYa1YEE

[24] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDUey9e_U2Q and http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/_/videos/ufo-court-salida-colorado/

[25] The Trislander was an eighteen-seater commercial aircraft with three propeller engines.

[26] The Channel Islands are self-governing dependencies of the British Crown. They have been such for almost a thousand years – since the time of William the Conqueror, the Norman Duke with a claim to the English throne based on his alleged naming as Edward the Confessor's heir.

[27] Leslie Kean, 2010 (see Bibliography)

[28] Jean-Francois Baure, David Clarke, Paul Fuller, Martin Shough. "Unusual Atmospheric Phenomena Observed Near Channel Islands, UK, April 23, 2007." *Journal of Scientific Exploration, 22*, 3, 2008. The relevant extract can be seen at http://martinshough.com/aerialphenomena/jse.pdf

[29] The MUFON report (77 pages of it) was unveiled on the "Larry King Live" TV show on July 11, 2008.

reports/080108stephenville_report.pdf (MUFON, Schulze & Powel)

[30] Anaprop is short for "anomalous propagation" – meaning some form of electromagnetic or weather phenomenon. Radar operators are generally well used to identifying such things.

[31] Jasper Copping, Daily Telegraph, Jan 23 2014

[32] This was local time (British Summer Time); the report gives the time as 1835Z – i.e. 6.35pm GMT.

[33] Airprox 2013086

[34] Good, Timothy. A Need to Know: UFOs, the Military and Intelligence; Pan Macmillan; 2006

[35] This probably refers to the Hampton VORTAC 113.60 (Lat/Long: 40-55-08.385N / 072-19-00.136W (40.9189958/-72.3167044). This would place the Airbus somewhere over Block Island Sound. However, we have no knowledge of the aircraft's heading at that time and therefore no idea of where "12 o'clock, thirty to forty miles" would place the BA 747.

[36] Captain Bobet was particularly fascinated by the colour of the object. He gave evidence that it was a really bright white, bright enough to be called glowing. See 1999 report at http://www.nicap.org/reports/SwissAir_MUJ_Sep1999.pdf

[37] Debonair went out of business six months later.

[38] Keith Basterfield and Paul Dean. "Near-miss between an Australia [sic] Airplane and an 'Unknown Object' near Perth, Western Australia, on 19th March 2014." NARCAP IR-7; January 2015.

[39] http://www.ufocusnz.org.nz/content/The-world-famous-%E2%80%98Kaikoura-Lights%E2%80%99-sightings/58.aspx

[40]

https://web.archive.org/web/20091219123010/http://brumac.8k.com/NEW_ZEALAND/NZSB.html

[41] "Air Shuttle" is the callsign for Mesa Airlines. Several websites have confused the call sign with the name of the airline "Norwegian Air Shuttle", which was not flying in the USA in 1996. Coincidentally, Norwegian Air does operate a 737 with the company number 5959 but this is not a flight number.

[42] Set up in the 1940s Mesaba was merged into Pinnacle Airlines in 2010 and is now, effectively, a part of Endeavor Airlines (a Delta subsidiary).

[43] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-FmbidMQ8I
http://listverse.com/2015/12/20/10-ufo-encounters-reported-by-commercial-airline-pilots/

[44] http://www.ufocasebook.com/tyronepa2002.html

[45] http://www.ufoinfo.com/sightings/uk/030500.shtml

[46] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9q0Mfw8rOp8

[47] There's a brief article on the anniversary of the sightings in the Chicago Tribune's Daily Southtown paper of September 22, 2015 by their Tinley Park correspondent Julie Dekker.

[48] See Airprox 055/08 and MoD DEFE 24/2450/1

[49] 2001 http://www.ufobc.ca/Sightings/sights2001_v2.htm; 2016 http://www.ufobc.ca/Sightings/sights2016_v2.html

[50] Reported by the BBC, Sky News and The Guardian on November 13 2018

[51] See the fascinating article – *Crustacean Camera* – in Scientific American, February 2019

[52] A specialised sea-rescue craft operated by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. It operates 350 lifeboats covering over 19,000 miles of coastline around the shores of Britain and Ireland.

[53] Paul Sinclair, Truth-Proof; op. cit. (see Bibliography)

[54] http://www.nuforc.org/webreports/092/S92901.html

[55] Luis Elizondo joined the *To the Stars Academy* after running AATIP for a period.

[56] An F/A-18 Super Hornet military jet captured this infrared video from several miles away of an unidentified flying object moving at high speed. The Department of Defense removed the date and location of the footage before releasing it. Christopher Mellon had served as deputy assistant secretary of defense for intelligence for the Clinton and George W. Bush administrations and staff director for the Senate Intelligence Committee.

[57] https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/16/us/politics/pentagon-program-ufo-harry-reid.html

[58] The senior people at TTSA have also said that there is a 400+ page report on the findings from the Bigelow/DoD AATIP study which has, also, yet to be released.

[59] Watch the Fravor interview with CNN: https://edition.cnn.com/videos/us/2017/12/20/david-fravor-intv-us-navy-pilot-ufo-encounter-sot-ebof.cnn

[60] Joe Murgia has a very comprehensive account of the conversation at MegaCon on his website at http://www.ufojoe.net/?p=805

[61] https://coi.tothestarsacademy.com/gimbal/

[62] New York Times - By Helene Cooper, Ralph Blumenthal and Leslie Kean

[63] https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/18473/faa-recordings-deepen-mystery-surrounding-ufo-over-oregon-that-sent-f-15s-scrambling

[64] https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/28231/multiple-f-a-18-pilots-disclose-recent-ufos-encounters-new-radar-tech-key-in-detection; see also https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/27666/what-the-hell-is-going-on-with-ufos-and-department-of-defense

[65] An fMRI (a “Functional” MRI) is a scan which seeks to measure blood flows in the brain. It can allow a physician to see which parts of the brain respond to certain stimuli.

[66] This does not mean that they may not have been abducted – only that they do not recall such an event happening to them. In the literature many researchers argue that large numbers of people are subjected to abduction but few ever remember the occurrence.

[67] These sorts of cases make us wonder because the sceptics argue that all abductees copy the

prevailing story-line and existing scenarios. These supposed aliens do not fit any of the standard types though.

[68] https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3222358/Father-son-crop-circle-making-team-reveal-secrets-spent-past-15-years-leaving-intricate-designs-countryside.html

[69] https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/howaboutthat/10217151/Crop-circles-demystified-how-the-patterns-are-created.html

[70] https://temporarytemples.co.uk/crop-circles/2018-crop-circles

[71] http://www.bltresearch.com/; http://www.bltresearch.com/plantab.php; http://www.bltresearch.com/otherfacts.php

[72] http://www.paranormalscholar.com/paranormal-wiltshire-stonehenge/

[73] There have been at least two US Federal investigations into the subject and the current estimate is for upwards of 40,000 incidents in the US since the 1970s.

[74] See http://www.apfu.org/images.html but ONLY if you feel up to viewing some extremely graphic pictures.

[75] Warning: the images on this site are not for the squeamish - http://www.apfu.org/images.html

[76] http://www.apfu.org/index.html

[77] http://www.beamsinvestigations.org/12882018AustralianCattleMutilations.html

[78] I've chosen to include this case for three reasons. It represents one of the most credible of early sightings by aircrew of strange things in the sky. It has eluded convincing explanation for sixty years. And, it illustrates the very best of ex-post facto sceptical analysis by NARCAP and its researcher Martin Shough.

[79] "Not terribly reliable" is putting it mildly. Boeing only built 56 of the Boeing 377 and of that number no less than 13 crashed (an accident rate of 23% - almost a quarter). The problem with almost all was the engines and propellers. Compare that to the Boeing 737 of which over 10,000 have been manufactured and 60 have crashed with fatalities – just over half a percent.

[80] Boeing B377 Stratocruisers – double decked, air-conditioned, piston engine airliners which could carry around 80 to 100 passengers. In some versions it was fitted with sleeping berths..

[81] Howard was an ex-bomber pilot with over 7,500 hours in the air. He'd completed over 250 transatlantic trips.

[82] Including George Allen, navigating officer; Doug Cox, radio officer, Dan Godfrey, engineering officer; and Bill Stewart, engineering officer.

[83] http://project1947.com/fig/fate_11_54.htm There's even a copy of a wonderfully dated newsreel interview with the aircraft's captain. He draws the objects and explains that around ten of the crew and passengers watched seven objects for about eighteen minutes.

[84] Shough's well-balanced and detailed report can be seen at http://www.caelestia.be/BOAC5.html

[85] MoD UFO papers **DEFE 24/2454/1**

[86] These advanced filtering systems have often been cited by ufologists as among the main reasons why radar stations so often fail to “see” unidentified objects. It such things move too fast or too slow they will simply not be painted onto the operator’s screen.

[87] President of the American Statistical Association in 2016.

[88] Radin, Dean; Real Magic; Harmony Books; 2018

[89] Salisbury, Frank B.. *The Utah UFO Display: A Scientist Brings Reason and Logic to over 400 Sightings in Utah's Uintah Basin*; Cedar Fort, Inc..

[90] Kelleher, Colm; *A Hunt for the Skinwalker: Science Confronts the Unexplained at a Remote Ranch in Utah* Pocket Books.

[91] Sinclair, Paul. *Truth-Proof: The Truth That Leaves No Proof* ; PBC Publishing..

[92] Sinclair, Paul op. cit.

[93] http://www.countryliving.com/life/a44064/eclipseville-hopkinsville-ky-history/

[94] The town of Kelly still has a “Little Green Men Day” which seems odd given that Elmer and Billy Ray were adamant that the creatures were silver.

[95] Kelleher, Colm A; *Hunt for the Skinwalker: Science Confronts the Unexplained at a Remote Ranch in Utah* . Pocket Books.

[96] https://rense.com/general32/strange.htm

[97] Kelleher, Colm; op cit.

[98] J R R Tolkien; *The Lord of the Rings Trilogy*.

[99] Think of one centimetre as marked on your ruler or tape measure (less than half an inch). A nanometre is one ten-millionth of a centimetre. A femtometre is one millionth of a nanometre (10^{-13} centimetres). In other words there are ten million, million femtometres in a centimetre.

[100] Bismuth was turned into gold back in the 1980s – but it required a very powerful particle accelerator and a great deal of energy to produce an infinitesimally small amount of the precious metal.

[101] Dr Steve Taylor; Blog: *Open-Minded Science* for the British journal – Psychology Today. https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/out-the-darkness/201901/open-minded-science

[102] Cubitt, T S; Perez-Garcia, David; Wolf, Michael; *The Unsolvable Problem*; Scientific American; Oct 2018

[103] Psi = parapsychological phenomena – extra-sensory perception, telepathy, precognition, telekinesis, etc.

[104] It's impossible to call them "religions" because those systems were much looser and far less prescriptive than a conventional religion. Most people were free to choose their own gods and goddesses to worship in their own way. If there were core beliefs they were in the sanctity of the planet Earth, and about the power of nature. Given our current struggles with the damage we've done to the planet these beliefs might not be such bad things.

[105] There's a fascinating PhD thesis waiting to be undertaken - the study of why our major western festivals – Christmas, Easter and Halloween have all been transmuted into children's festivals. Is it only because, by doing so, the adults avoid the necessity to challenge Christianity head-on? Or is there more?

[106] Sinclair, Paul, op. cit.

[107] Kelleher, Colm, op. cit.

[108] In caves that have been well-documented in France, Germany, Spain, South Africa and Australia including the world-famous Lascaux, Peche Merle, San, Trois Freres, and Chauvet caves, human beings painted the strangest of creatures. They did this many thousands of years before the last Glacial Maximum. We are talking of work – some of it exquisitely painted – which was created by people who crawled a long way, deep into subterranean caves, tunnels and crevices, with crude burning torches.

[109] Note: sheep, not humans.

[110] For example, Gordon Cooper's film and photos from Edward's AFB; the radar operators and controllers at Washington airport 1952; the Aurigny pilot sighting; the test pilot Stan Hubbard at Farnborough; and Illinois cop sightings; to mention but a handful.

[111] We humans are already using the quantum world to transmit messages. Faster than light communication has now been demonstrated in a proof-of-concept experiment by the Chinese and Austrian Academies of Sciences with the "Micius" satellite. Using entangled photons the satellite has proved that entanglement can deliver quantum "messages" from space to Earth.

.

[112] With a trillion drones it would take this super-advanced civilisation just a billion Solar years to search the entire known universe! But self-replicating drones might well be able to perform the trick in a year or two.

[113] If one ignores the rumours that Presidents Truman and Eisenhower received alien delegations and had discussions with them!

[114] https://www.history.com/news/ufo-sightings-speed-appearance-movement